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**Ptolemy (Early 1st – Mid 2nd c. AD),
On Aristotle's Life, Testament and Writings.
Translation and Study**

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VIRO DOCTISSIMO

وليس الأمر في هذا كما ظنّ بعض الناس أنّ كلّ صناعة منفردة بنفسها وأنّها لا تتبع بعضها بعضاً.

(VPA §1.4)

Table of contents

1.	Introduction	4
2.	Sources for VPA	6
2.1.	Manuscripts.....	6
2.2.	Ibn al-Nadīm, <i>Fihrist</i>	7
2.3.	Al-Mubashshir b. Fātik, <i>Choice Wise Sayings and Fine Statements</i>	8
2.4.	Ibn al-Qiftī, <i>History of Learned Men</i>	8
2.5.	Ibn Abī Uṣaybi'a, <i>The Best Accounts on the Classes of the Physicians</i>	9
2.6.	Al-Mas'ūdī, <i>The Book of Notification and Verification</i>	9
2.7.	Disregared sources	10
3.	Sources for VPG.....	10
3.1.	<i>Vita Marciana, Vita Latina, Vita Vulgata</i>	10
3.2.	<i>Vita Ammonio ascripta</i>	11
3.3.	Diogenes Laertius and the <i>Vita Hesychii</i>	12
3.4.	Andronicus, <i>Pinax of Aristotle's Writings</i>	12
3.5.	Disregarded sources.....	13
4.	A translation of VPA.....	13
5.	History of research	27
6.	VPA's relation to VPG.....	34
6.1.	Part I and T1-2	34
6.2.	Part II.....	36
6.2.1.	§2.1 and T3	37

6.2.2.	§2.1 and T4	38
6.2.3.	§2.2 and T5	39
6.2.4.	§§2.3-9	40
6.2.5.	§2.10, §2.11, T6 and T7	41
6.2.6.	§2.11 and T8	42
6.2.7.	§2.12 and T9	42
6.2.8.	§§2.13-16 and T10	44
6.2.9.	§§2.17-20	45
6.2.10.	Conclusions on part II	46
6.3.	Part III	46
6.4.	Part IV	49
6.5.	Features of the Arabic and Syriac translations	51
7.	<i>VPG</i> 's sources	52
8.	Ptolemy and his epistemological approach to bibliography	55
8.1.	A commented summary of part I	55
8.2.	Which writings did Ptolemy order?	60
8.3.	<i>Nachleben</i> of Ptolemy's sorting	64
8.4.	The order of Plato's books	65
8.5.	Ptolemy's date	70
8.6.	Identifications of Ptolemy	71
8.6.1.	Ptolemy Chennus (T11-13)	71
8.6.2.	Ptolemy the Platonist (T14)	73
8.6.3.	Ptolemy the Peripatetic (T15)	74
8.6.4.	Ptolemy Pinacographus	76
8.6.5.	Claudius Ptolemy (T16)	77
9.	Conclusions	82
10.	Bibliography	83

1. Introduction

A number of recent articles¹ have revived scholarly interest in the ancient biographies of Aristotle and catalogues of his writings, a subject that has otherwise been almost entirely stagnating since the mid 1980's. A key source for investigating this field is *On Aristotle's Life, Testament and Writings* by a certain Ptolemy, a work lost in its original Greek version (*Vita Ptolemaei Graeca*, henceforth *VPG*) but extant in an Arabic translation (*Vita Ptolemaei Arabice versa*, *VPA*). A manuscript of *VPA* has been long known to scholarship but no complete critical edition of the work is available at present. A comprehensive philological treatment of *VPA* and a reconstruction of its Greek source text has been recently described as “arguably the most urgent desideratum of research into the early transmission of Aristotle[']s philosophy” (FALCON 2017). The present thesis aims to fill this gap by introducing a new MS of *VPA* and presenting a translation and study of the work based on my forthcoming critical edition.²

Despite focussing on an Arabic source, this thesis can be described as a piece of Classical scholarship in that it addresses two pressing issues pertaining to this field of studies: (i) the extent to which *VPG* can be reconstructed from its surviving translation, and (ii) the identity and philosophical orientation of the author of the Greek version. The former problem is tackled by means of a detailed philological investigation of *VPA* and the surviving Greek and Latin testimonies; it appears that *VPA* mostly reflect the content of its lost source text in an accurate way, although several passages were abridged or left out and others interpolated. The discussion of the latter problem involves a comparison of the reconstructed *VPG* with other Greek philosophical texts, which indicates that the work must be placed in the early 1st-mid 2nd c. AD. The most probable identification of *VPG*'s author emerging from our analysis is that with the astronomer and eclectic philosopher Claudius Ptolemy. Noteworthy by-products of the present thesis are the discovery of what is possibly a new fragment of Hermippus of Smyrna's (*fl.* second half of the 3rd c. BC) *Life of Aristotle* and the recovery of a hitherto unnoticed Neoplatonic biography of Aristotle surviving in Arabic only. Also, it was possible to identify an *Überlieferungsgemeinschaft* in Greek manuscripts of Aristotle where the order of the biological works may be influenced by *VPG*'s pinax of his writings.

¹ Especially DIETZE-MAGER 2015, 2015a; also HAAKE 2006; LIMONE 2018; OVERWIEN 2014; PERKAMS 2019; PRIMAVESI 2007; TARÁN & GUTAS 2012 (15-25, 31). In this thesis, Arabic is transliterated according to the guidelines established by the project *Ptolemaeus Arabus et Latinus* of the Bavarian Academy of Science and Humanities. All translations are my own.

² Prof. Andreas Lammer (Trier) announced on the website academia.edu his intention to edit and study Ptolemy's pinax (LAMMER undated). Since he was not aware of any additional witness of *VPA*, I shared with him my information on the newly found MS in the hope that his edition will benefit from it. This thesis shall hopefully meet the standard set in his forthcoming work and be regarded as complementing it.

A number of issues pertaining to *VPG* and *VPA* could not be addressed within the context of this thesis. The question of *VPG*'s sources is only summarily dealt with, and the text shows some more potential for retrieving information on lost Hellenistic works. Also, no investigation of *VPG*'s place in the Greek tradition of literary biographies has been undertaken. This is due to the fact that the relevant sections of *VPA* have emerged as the least faithful ones to its Greek original; too many variants would have to be carefully assessed before proceeding to plausible conclusions. Furthermore, it should be stressed now that, when dealing with information on Aristotle's life preserved in *VPG-VPA*, we are never concerned with the historicity of the reports, as we rather focus on how they can be used to gain insight into Ptolemy and his work.

The method adopted in this thesis is a purely philological one, inspired by the works of German Graeco-Arabists of the late 19th c. Graeco-Arabic sources are notorious for their complicated textual history, and *VPG-VPA* is no exception to this rule; therefore, philological rigour represents the only way to deal with a variety of issues inherent in the primary sources investigated. Most 20th c. scholarly contributions on *VPG-VPA* refrained from engaging with the pioneering reconstructions of *Quellenforscher* and in some cases even dismissed them *a priori*, thus producing a season of unoriginal studies on *VPG-VPA*. But hindsight makes it possible to spot the pitfalls the Germans could not see, and their partially valid results should be carefully examined, corrected whenever necessary and built upon with philological diligence.³

This thesis follows a linear development and chapters tend to build on each other. The natural first step is introducing the primary Arabic (ch. 2) and Greek sources (ch. 3), which makes it possible to understand the apparatus to the translation of *VPA* based on our forthcoming critical edition (ch. 4). Subsequently, the most important scholarly contributions on *VPG* and *VPA* shall be scrutinised (ch. 5). The first part of our study of the text consists in an analysis of the relation between the transmitted Arabic text and the lost Greek source, which allows to determine to what degree *VPA* can replace *VPG* in an investigation of the latter's origin and features (ch. 6). Building on this, the question of *VPG*'s sources is addressed, albeit summarily (ch. 7). The last section contextualises *VPG* against the background of the bibliographical tradition of the Imperial Era and attempts an identification of the work's author based its philosophical content (ch. 8).

I would like to thank all scholars whom I have consulted since I first became interested in the biographies of Aristotle some two years ago. Prof. Dr. Christoph Riedweg kindly agreed to supervise a thesis on a subject partially lying outside the traditional boundaries of Classical Philology. Dr. Benno van Dalen, Dr. Pouyan Rezavani (BAdW Munich) and Dr. José Bellver (KU Leuven) retrieved

³ See GUTAS (1986) on the opposition between older and newer research on *VPG-VPA* and why a more solid version of the old-fashioned approach of *Quellenforscher* should be revived.

and shared with me colour scanned images of VPA's manuscripts. Dr. Natalia Bachour helped me make sense of some difficult passages in the Arabic. Ramona Breu has unceasingly supported me during this challenging period of my life.

2. Sources for VPA

The transmission of Ptolemy's *Vita* falls into two main categories: (i) *VPA*, which is transmitted via two Arabic MSS and extensive quotations in Arabic authors, and (ii) *VPG*, which is lost in its full form but fragmentarily preserved in a handful of late antique works. The relevant sources shall be presented in this order in ch. 2 and ch. 3 respectively.

2.1. MANUSCRIPTS

Two late Arabic MSS preserve a work under the heading "A treatise by a man called Ptolemy, in which are [contained] Aristotle's testament, the catalogue of his writings, and some information on him; [addressed] to a man called Gallus"⁴ (§0)⁵. The title of the work perfectly matches its content, which falls into a preface addressed to Gallus (part I, §§1.1-7), a biography of Aristotle (part II, §§2.1-20), a transcription of his testament (part III, §§3.1-14) and a pinax of his writings (part IV, #1-102).

The identification of this work (*VPA*) with a translation of a lost Greek source text (*VPG*) is beyond doubt thanks to a testimony found in David's (fl. second half 6th c.) *Commentary on the Categories*⁶ 107.11 (**T1.1**⁷), where a certain Ptolemy⁸ is referred to as <ὁ> ἀναγραφὴν αὐτῶν [scil. τῶν Ἀριστοτελικῶν συγγραμμάτων] ποιησάμενος καὶ τὸν βίον αὐτοῦ καὶ τὴν διαθήκην. This agrees with *VPA*'s title except for the missing dedication to a certain Gallus (see below, ch. 6.1). Furthermore, two late antique *Vitae* mention a work by a certain Ptolemy preserving Aristotle's testament and a pinax of his writings and contain segments agreeing with the Arabic text (**T1.2-3**, see below, ch. 6.1-2).

The more reliable of the two Arabic witnesses is MS Qum, Library of the Ayatollah Mar'ashī, 12388, ff. 185v-190r (= **A**), which the library's catalogue correctly describes as containing *VPA* (MAR'ASHI 2003: 313-4). This MS has so far escaped the attention of scholars with the exception of

⁴ For the identification of the Arabic *Gh-L-S* with an unspecified Gallus, see MÜLLER (1875: 23).

⁵ Paragraph references are made to the translation presented in ch. 4.

⁶ cf. HELMIG (2019) for the attribution to David. Older research building on Busse's edition speaks of Elias.

⁷ T-references are made to our collection of texts in ch. 6 (**T1-10**) and ch. 8 (**T11-15**).

⁸ David actually speaks of Ptolemy Philadelphus, but this is a misguided conjecture from his side (if only because Andronicus of Rhodes, fl. after 30 BC, is mentioned in it, §1.1, §1.5, §1.6, #100a). *VPG* circulated in Greek under the authorship of a mere "Ptolemy", see below, ch. 6.1.

POURJAVADY & SCHMIDTKE (2015: 262 fn. 85). According to the colophon, the section preserving *VPA* was copied by the Iranian philosopher Jalāl al-Dīn al-Dawānī (c. 1426-1502) in 1473, when he was active in Shiraz.⁹

The second witness has been known in scholarship since 1943, when H. Ritter noticed the presence of *VPA* on ff. 10r-18r of MS Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library, Ayasofya 4833 (= **B**).¹⁰ MAHDĪ (1961: 27) described the codex in detail and pointed out that the section containing *VPA* was written by a different hand and on more recent paper than the remainder of the MS. The section lacks a colophon but the *terminus post quem non* is 1739-40, that is, the foundation of the Ayasofya Library, to which the MS was endowed according to a note on f. 1r. As for the relation between the two MSS, it is clear that the younger **B** was not copied from the older **A**, as the latter is derived from a physically mutilated exemplar¹¹ but the former is not.

Despite surviving in only two witnesses, *VPA* circulated widely from the 10th c. until the 13th c. at least, as shown by the extensive quotations found in five Arabic works composed in that period in present day Egypt, Syria and Iraq. The indirect transmission is important on two grounds: on the one hand, it can help establishing the original text of the work, as the quality of the archetype of the direct transmission was poor; on the other, a considerable number of previous scholarly works on *VPG* and *VPA* were based solely on the indirect transmission¹², so that their value cannot be appraised without investigating it. In the following sub-chapters, we shall survey the relevant indirect sources.

2.2. IBN AL-NADĪM, *FIHRIST*

The bookseller Abū al-Faraj Muḥammad b. Ishāq b. Muḥammad b. Ishāq b. al-Nadīm (Ibn al-Nadīm, henceforth IaN; c. 910/930-990) is one of the most important testimonies of the written culture of the first Islamic centuries. In 377/987-8, he finished working on the *Fihrist*, or “catalogue”, an index of all Arabic (and many Syriac) books circulating in Baghdad at the time.¹³

IaN devoted a brief bio-bibliographical entry in the *Fihrist* to *VPA* and its author, whom he labelled “Ptolemy al-Gharīb”, meaning “the stranger” or “the unknown” (**T11.2**, see ch. 8.6.1). Ptolemy is also explicitly mentioned in his biography of Aristotle (**T11.1**). IaN took mostly brief segments from

⁹ Based on the biography of al-Dawānī by POURJAVADY (2011: 4-16), there is a slight possibility that by 1473, he had not yet returned from Tabriz to Shiraz.

¹⁰ Cf. KRAUS (1944). The finding happened by 1943, when ROSENTHAL & WALZER's (1943: xix) mentioned Ritter as the discoverer of al-Fārābī's *Philosophy of Plato* found in the same MS **B**.

¹¹ Four blank spaces in **A**, occurring in regular intervals and covering 25-30 letters each, point to a template where the top or bottom line was damaged (by moisture?), thus becoming unreadable to al-Dawānī.

¹² Exceptions are DÜRING (1971); PLEZIA (1975, 1985); HEIN (1985); GUTAS (1986); DIETZE-MAGER (2015, 2015a); cf. below, ch. 5. Some recent studies by non-Arabists (e.g. HAAKE 2006; PRIMAVESI 2007) are based Hein's partial translation.

¹³ On IaN and his *Fihrist*, see STEWART (2014).

part II, in accordance with his statement that he only quoted the essential points from the many reports on Aristotle's life he had come across (158.21; cf. GUTAS 1986: 33 fn. 12). The testament, however, was transcribed *in extenso*, with only a few segments missing. The quality of the MS used by IaN was high, although the text in the *Fihrist* displays minor traces of editorial interventions.

2.3. AL-MUBASHSHIR B. FĀTIK, *CHOICE WISE SAYINGS AND FINE STATEMENTS*

The *Choice Wise Sayings and Fine Statements* (*Mukhtār al-ḥikam wa-maḥāsin al-kilam*), completed in 1048-9, is one of the most influential gnomologia in the Arabic tradition. Its author, the Egyptian savant Abū l-Wafā' al-Mubashshir b. Fātik (henceforth MiF), has been described as an outstanding representative of 11th c. Fāṭimid learned culture.¹⁴

While MiF does not always acknowledge his borrowings, he clearly combined different sources translated from Greek in his biography of Aristotle, one of which was *VPA* (cf. GUTAS 1986: 28). A survey of MiF's quotations reveals that he did not use Ptolemy's preface to Gallus and the pinax; of the testament, only some heavily abridged information is left (183.11-15). The biographical sections of *VPA* have, however, been quoted at length, mostly without abridging the text. In spite of the fact that MiF often redacted the text of his source, the *Choice Wise Sayings* remain an important branch of the indirect transmission.¹⁵

2.4. IBN AL-QIṬĪ, *HISTORY OF LEARNED MEN*

Jamāl al-Dīn Abū l-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Yūsuf b. Ibrāhīm b. 'Abd al-Wāḥid al-Shaybānī b. al-Qiṭī (henceforth IaQ, 1172-1248) composed in Aleppo the *Book on Notifying Scholars of the Information about Learned Men* (*Kitāb Ikḥbār al-'ulamā' bi-akḥbār al-ḥukamā'*), usually referred to as the *History of Learned Men*. It is a biographical dictionary based on excellent sources and preserved in an abbreviation made shortly after IaQ's death.¹⁶ Luckily for us, the passages preserving material from *VPA* were not abridged.

In the section devoted to Aristotle, IaQ quotes passages from part II and the entirety of part III and part IV. The selection of textual pieces from part II perfectly matches that made by IaN, and the text of the testament displays some *errores coniunctivi* with the *Fihrist*. It is therefore clear that IaQ

¹⁴ On MiF and his work, see ROSENTHAL (1960-1961: 136-8) and more recently COTTRELL (2011).

¹⁵ BADAŴĪ (1958), the only editor of the *Choice Wise Sayings*, mistook a later recension of the text for its original version and did not indicate readings of other branches in the apparatus (cf. COTTRELL 2008: 537). In my critical edition of *VPA*, I collated his edition against a witness of the original version (MS Berlin, SPKB, Or. fol. 3100) and transcribed all diverging readings.

¹⁶ On IaQ and his work, see DIETRICH (2012).

transcribed them from IaN rather than from an independent MS of *VPA*, as BAUMSTARK (1900: 16) correctly inferred. On the other hand, the pinax was not present in IaN, and the religious formulas transcribed at its end by IaQ (T12.1) make it clear that he copied it from an actual witness of *VPA*. Interestingly, the peculiar recension we find in IaQ preserves an older stage of the transmission than the direct witnesses (see below, ch. 4, ch. 6.4). IaQ also devoted a separate bio-bibliographical entry to Ptolemy 'the Unknown' and *VPA* (T12.2, cf. ch. 8.6.1).

2.5. IBN ABĪ UṢAYBĪ'A, *THE BEST ACCOUNTS ON THE CLASSES OF THE PHYSICIANS*

A source of paramount importance for reconstructing *VPA* is the *Best Accounts on the Classes of the Physicians* ('*Uyūn al-anbā' fī ṭabaqāt al-aṭibbā'*), a monumental history of medicine representing the lifetime achievement of the Syrian physician and poet Muwaffaq al-Dīn Abū l-'Abbās Aḥmad b. al-Qāsim b. Khalīfa b. Yūnus al-Khazrajī, commonly known as Ibn Abī Uṣaybi'a (henceforth IAU; 1200/1-1269-70).¹⁷

The *Best Accounts* devote a long chapter to Aristotle, who is indeed reported to have engaged with medicine in *VPA* (cf. §4.#80, #102). IAU explicitly mentions Ptolemy among his many sources for Aristotle's biography (T13); it appears that he transcribed the whole of *VPA* with the exception of the preface to Gallus and a short transition from the biography to the testament, these parts being of little interest for his history of physicians.

IAU has a reputation for faithfully quoting his sources¹⁸ and *VPA* is no exception to this tendency of his. The only traces of redaction are occasional parenthetical remarks and a handful of improvements to the worse. His template was of excellent quality and allows to restore several textual passages omitted in the direct transmission.

2.6. AL-MAS'ŪDĪ, *THE BOOK OF NOTIFICATION AND VERIFICATION*

The Book of Notification and Verification (*Kitāb al-Tanbīh wa al-ishrāf*) is a work by the historian and traveller Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn al-Mas'ūdī (c. 893-956).¹⁹ On four occasions, al-Mas'ūdī referred to specific books by Aristotle and provided additional information on them by

¹⁷ On IAU and his work, see the introductory chapters to the outstanding critical edition by SAVAGE-SMITH, SWAIN, VAN GELDER & SÁNCHEZ (2020).

¹⁸ This can be best seen in other cases where IAU copied in full a text that also survived in the direct transmission, cf. e.g. the autobiography of Ibn al-Haytham in ch. 14.22 which shows a considerable degree of compatibility with an independent MS of this work published by HEINEN (1979).

¹⁹ On al-Mas'ūdī and his work, cf. PELLAT (2012).

transcribing the relevant entries from *VPG*'s pinax.²⁰ These brief segments represent the earliest evidence for the circulation of *VPA* in Arabic.

2.7. DISREGARED SOURCES

A number of Arabic texts preserve material ultimately derived from *VPA* but taken second-hand from IaN, MiF, IaQ and IAU. Therefore, they are of no use for investigating the relationship between the direct and the indirect transmission of *VPA*. Examples for sources of this kind are Muḥammad b. Maḥmūd al-Shahrazūrī (13th c.), whose entry on Aristotle in the *Promenade of the Souls* was recognised as based on MiF's biography (COTTRELL 2004-2005: 239; BAUMSTARK 1900: 11), and Bar Hebraeus (13th c.), whose information on Aristotle in multiple works depends on IaQ (BAUMSTARK *ibid.*). As discussed above (ch. 2.4), IaQ himself partially qualifies as a derivative source: while the pinax was taken from an actual witness of *VPA*, the excerpts from part II and III derive from IaN and can therefore be disregarded from our pool of sources.

3. Sources for *VPG*

The following survey of Greek and Latin sources includes ancient biographies that directly drew on *VPG* (ch. 3.1-2) as well as works preserving parallel passages that shall be investigated in the course of our study (ch. 3.3-4).

3.1. *VITA MARCIANA*, *VITA LATINA*, *VITA VULGATA*

The *Vita Marciana* (henceforth *VM*) is an important document for reconstructing the study of Aristotle in the late Alexandrian Academy. The work's Neoplatonic origin becomes clear from its concern with presenting Aristotle as Plato's true intellectual heir on the one hand and from a number of parallel passages in Ammonius Hermiae, Philoponus, Olympiodorus and David on the other.²¹ Building on BUSSE (1893), DÜRING (1957: 116-9) considered *VM* to be the outcome of a long process of abridgement and expansion by several generations of Neoplatonic scholars who used the *Vita* as an introduction for lectures on the *Categories*. This is true also of the Neoplatonic biographies *Vita Latina* (*VL*) and *Vita Vulgata* (*VV*), which are clearly derived from the same source as *VM*. According

²⁰ The four passages concern the entries #39, #40, #54 and #90 (references in fn. 27). Al-Mas'ūdī also mentions a "book on the animals, being 19 sections" on p. 116, clearly referring to the *Historia animalium*, but the title in *VPG* is different and indicates the canonical ten books. The quote from #90 was noticed by HEIN (1985: 325), who overlooked the fact that it is a fragment of the work she edited in the same volume.

²¹ See the *apparatus locorum parallelorum* to DÜRING's edition (1957: 96-106) and his commentary *ad loc.*

to DÜRING (1957: 117), the common ancestor is to be traced back to Iamblichus' school. However, an Alexandrian origin should not be ruled out.

BUSSE (1893: 264) argued that *VM*'s "Hauptquelle" was *VPG*, and DÜRING (1957: 118) even regarded the common source as an epitome thereof. These views have been correctly dismissed by PLEZIA (1975: 42) through a comparison with a direct witness of *VPA*, which showed that *VPG*'s influence on *VM* and more generally on Neoplatonic biographies had been grossly overestimated (see below, ch. 5). Our analysis (ch. 6.1-2) shall demonstrate that only a handful of passages in *VM* and the related Neoplatonic biographies were ultimately taken *VPG*.

As for the *Vita Latina*, this work betrays remarkable similarities with *VM* despite surviving solely in a *verbum de verbo* Latin translation made from a lost Greek original. It must be noted, though, that each of the two contains material missing in the other and major sections of the text are found in a different order (cf. DÜRING 1957: 160-2). The earliest MSS of *VL* date from the 13th c. and most of them contain an addition based on William of Moerbeke's translation of Simplicius' *Commentary on De Caelo* (*ibid.* p. 162). Since the work's medieval Latin diction rules out the possibility that we are dealing with a late antique translation, Düring is most likely correct in assigning it to the 13th c.

The *Vita Vulgata* belongs to the same tradition of *VM* and *VL* but seems to be less close to them than they are to each other. This *Vita* too left traces in the writings of Neoplatonic philosopher: passages from an anonymous *Commentary on Porphyry's Isagoge* (MS Munich, BSB, gr. 399) were compared with some supposed additions found in *VV* (BUSSE 1893: 260-2), and DÜRING (1957: 139) surmised that *VV* was read in the school where the author of the anonymous *Commentary* also taught, possibly around the middle of the 6th c.

3.2. VITA AMMONIO ASCRIPTA

The *Vita Ammonio* (*scil. Hermiae*) *ascripta* (*VA* hereafter) was first known through a single Syriac MS in which it appears as a preface to the *Categories*. BAUMSTARK (1900: 35-6) argued that the short biography was translated from Greek, a hypothesis later confirmed when the source text was retrieved and edited by REINSCH (1982). In the Greek tradition too, it is placed before a witness of the *Categories*. The only major difference between the two versions is the omission of the ascription to Ammonius in the Greek text, which strengthens BAUMSTARK's (1900: 2) doubts about the authorship claim in the title of the Syriac version.

BAUMSTARK (p. 36-7) regarded *VA* as a Neoplatonic abridgement of *VPG*, but this hypothesis is only valid if based on his incorrect reconstruction of the textual transmission (see below, ch. 5). Still, seven paragraphs out of nine in *VA* have parallel passages in *VPA* that match the Arabic almost

verbatim. Hence, Baumstark's intuition was partially correct: VA is probably a direct abridgement of VPG to which some material was added from other sources (see below, ch. 6.2.10).

3.3. DIOGENES LAERTIUS AND THE *VITA HESYCHII*

Diogenes Laertius (henceforth DL) is known to have compiled his *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* from a plethora of valuable sources. Even though he apparently did not use VPG in his biography of Aristotle, his text is relevant for our study on three grounds: (i) it preserves a testament of Aristotle similar, but by no means identical, to the one constituting part III of VPA (cf. below, ch. 6.3, ch. 7); (ii) some segments derived from lost Hellenistic biographies show similarities with passages in VPA, which could point to a common source for DL and VPG (ch. 7); and (iii) the pinax of Aristotle's writings in DL calls for a comparison with Ptolemy's (ch. 6.4, 8 *passim*).

DL's pinax is clearly derived from the same Hellenistic source of the *Vita Hesychii* (VH), which was, however, expanded upon in the so-called *appendix Hesychiana* (MORAUX 1951: 209). VH was extracted from a lost work by Hesychius of Miletus (6th c.), the ὀνοματολόγος ἢ πίναξ τῶν ἐν παιδείᾳ ὀνομαστών (DORANDI 2000). It also preserves some concise but interesting biographical material that occasionally agrees with reports scattered in Greek literature.

3.4. ANDRONICUS, *PINAX OF ARISTOTLE'S WRITINGS*

Andronicus of Rhodes, a Peripatetic scholarch in Alexandria (*fl.* after 30 BC, cf. PERKAMS 2019: 460-1) composed a lost πίναξ τῶν Ἀριστοτέλους συγγραμμάτων in at least five books as well as a pinax of Theophrastus' writings, as references in VPA and other sources indicate.²² Plutarch (*Sull.* 26) links the production of the pinakes with an edition of the two philosophers' works prepared by the same Andronicus.²³ Porphyry, whose edition of Plotinus' *Enneads* was inspired by Andronicus' editorial activity, states that the Rhodian grouped treatises with a common subject-matter (ὑπόθεσις) into larger works (πραγματεῖαι).²⁴ Modern scholars used to consider VPG as a work heavily depending on Andronicus's pinax (cf. e.g. DÜRING 1957), but this hypothesis has become untenable since the rediscovery of Ptolemy's preface (cf. below, ch. 6.4, 8.1-2).

²² §1.1, §1.5, §1.6, #100a, **T1.2-3**, Hermippus of Smyrna T 20, F 37a Bollansée. Other works by Andronicus are discussed by KUPREEVA (2018: 261-6).

²³ Some details of Plutarch's account collide with other testimonies concerning the rediscovery of Aristotle's lost books and a supposed Roman edition thereof; cf. PRIMAVESI (2007) on the issue. For further discussions of Andronicus, his editions and his pinakes, cf. MORAUX (1973: 45-94), TARÁN & GUTAS (2012: 15-25, 31), HATZIMICHALI (2013, not without our fn. 241), and most recently DIETZE-MAGER (2015; 2015a) and KUPREEVA (2018: 257-60).

²⁴ *Vita Plotini* 24 τὰ Ἀριστοτέλους καὶ Θεοφράστου εἰς πραγματείας διεῖλε τὰς οἰκείας ὑποθέσεις εἰς ταῦτὸν συναγαγών.

3.5. DISREGARDED SOURCES

As in the case of the Arabic transmission (see above, ch. 2.7), some Greek and Latin sources are entirely derivative and can be disregarded as irrelevant for our scope as long as their immediate sources are extant. Examples for this are Janus Lascaris' *Life of Aristotle*, which DÜRING (1957: 140-1) demonstrated to be based on *VM*, and the Medieval and Renaissance *Vitae* discussed *ibid.*, pp. 164-79.²⁵

A further disregarded source is the anonymous *Vita Syriaca II* discovered by BAUMSTARK (1900). DÜRING (1957: 189) made the case that the short work preserves Ptolemaic material; however, in view of our reconstruction of the textual transmission, it seems better to revert to BAUMSTARK's (1900: 105) position, who considered it a Syriac translation of material not related to *VP*.

4. A translation of *VPA*

The relevant sources having been introduced, we can present a translation of *VPA* based on our forthcoming critical edition. There exist no previous full editions or translations of the work. The pinax was edited, translated into Latin and German and translated back into Greek multiple times based on *IaQ* and *IAU*;²⁶ HEIN's 1985 edition of part IV marked an important development in that it resorted to a *MS* of the direct transmission, namely **B**. *MS A* only offers a handful of superior readings which were in most cases already known from *IaQ* and *IAU*. Therefore, my edition of the pinax tends to differ from Hein's only in minor points.

The matter is different when it comes to parts I-III. Part I was edited and translated from *MS B* by HEIN (1985), though in a rather inaccurate way, as DIETZE-MAGER (2015a: 98-9) indicated. Dietze-Mager therefore had E. Wakelnig and other Arabists transcribe and translate part I anew (*ibid.*, pp. 121-3), thus improving on Hein's work. The valuable readings of *MS A* in this section allow major improvements on Dietze-Mager's text and will ultimately lead to a radically different interpretation of *VP* in ch. 8. As for part II-III, they have never been edited or translated before on the basis of the direct transmission.

To sum up the *ratio edendi* adopted in the edition, I have based the text on **AB** but introduced many readings from the indirect transmission. In doing so, I have first discriminated between those

²⁵ DÜRING (*ibid.* 167) noticed that at least one of the medieval *Vitae* contains material otherwise found exclusively in the Arabic tradition but could not identify the relevant channel of transmission from Arabic into Latin. The solution is an easy one: MiF's work had been translated into Spanish and from there into Latin in the 13th c. (cf. CROMBACH 1971: xvii).

²⁶ Older editions and translations are listed below, fn. 227, and in HEIN (1985: 389).

readings in indirect sources preserving VPA's original wording and those reflecting conscious innovations by the Arabic authors quoting it. Indeed, it appears that IaN, MiF, IaQ and IAU all adopted peculiar strategies of redaction that emerge from their variant readings.²⁷ The most important readings of the direct and indirect transmission are reported in English in the footnotes to the translation.

The translation is *verbum de verbo*. The sacrifice of stylistic elegance aims to produce a text that will be suitable for the philological comparison with the testimonia of VPG in ch. 6. I use the following editorial signs:

(αβγ): Greek terms clearly recognisable behind the Arabic (cf. ULLMANN 2002-2018 s.v.).

[abc]: additions to the translation (for the sake of clarity).

{abc}: editorial corrections and additions taken from the indirect transmission.²⁸

<abc>: editorial additions.

[abc]: editorial deletions, always provided with an explanatory footnote to distinguish them from the additions to the translation.

[[abc]]: scribal deletions.

I do not use curly brackets in the pinax, as my text mostly relies on IaQ rather than on the direct witnesses. Also, in that section, the three existing recensions (AB, IaQ, IAU; see ch. 6.4) present some peculiarities. For instance, IaQ preserves numerous transliterations of the works' titles from Greek which have almost entirely disappeared from the direct transmission and IAU. I always give IaQ's transliterations in the translation, as his text preserves an earlier stage of the text than AB and IAU, but do not indicate each time that the relevant segment is missing in the two other sources.²⁹

²⁷ In singling out different strategies of redaction, I have followed the recommendations of GUTAS (1986: 29). Whether IaN, MiF, IaQ and IAU used actual witnesses of VPA was a question debated in scholarship, but the issue has been settled (see ch. 5 below). The *apparatus locorum parallelorum* is as follows: §§2.1-19: IAU 4.6.2.1-3.1; §2.1: excerpted in IaN 2.157.3-6; §2.1 *Aristotle... Machaon*: excerpted in MiF 179.1-2; §2.1 *His mother's name... lineage to Asclepius*: MiF 179.2-5; §2.2 *that the entrustment... Pythion*: IaN 2.157.8; §2.3 *It is said... house of studies*: IaN 2.157.9-10; §2.3 *It is said that he spent twenty years studyings*: MiF 180.11-12; §2.3 *and that when Plato... to the Peripatetic philosophers*: MiF 180.14-181.1; §§2.4-6 *Then, when Plato... with Socrates*: MiF 181.9-182.2; §2.10 *that he only studied... thirty years of age*: IaN 2.157.10-11; §2.11 *It is said... worried them*: MiF 182.13-15; IAU 4.6.3.2 from MiF; §§2.11-12 *For it was... at his time*: MiF 182.12-13; §§2.17-18 *When Philip died... called Stagira*: MiF 182.5-11; excerpted in IaN 2.158.18-21; §§2.18 *He also restored the buildings of the city called Stagira*: IaN 2.158.21; §§3.1-14: IAU 4.6.6.1-2; IaN 2.159.3-160.15; excerpted in MiF 183.11-15; §4.#1-#102: IaQ 42.17-48.6; IAU 4.6.13.1-2; §4.#39 *al-Mas'ūdī, Kitāb al-Tanbīh wa l-ishrāf*, 120.12-5; §4.#40 *ibid.* 120.15; §4.#54 *ibid.* 120.15-6; §4.#90 *ibid.* 78.11-4.

²⁸ I do not use curly brackets for Greek prosoponyms and toponyms reconstructed on the basis of the indirect transmission. Most words of this kind are incorrect in the direct witnesses and signalling this every single time would disrupt the reading.

²⁹ On the transliterations, cf. ch. 6.4. IAU and the direct transmission systematically left them out with the exception of those works not known under an Arabic title (#2 Σοφιστής, #10 Ἀρχύτας and #29-33 the individual works of the organon). Curiously, in IAU alone, we find #62 ἔνστασις, which is given as the Greek original of the Arabic title *On the Counterargument*. Conversely, the direct transmission preserves the Greek title προβλήματα ἐγκύκλια as a gloss on #77 *General Problems*, which is transliterated just like in IaQ. As for the general structure of the entries, the direct transmission introduces each with the expression "his book" but then varies in sometimes giving the title of the book straight-away, sometimes adding "known as..." or the like and sometimes making a full relative sentence "that he labelled...". In choosing among these three possibilities, AB mostly agree with IaQ; divergences have been marked in the footnotes.

I have inserted occasional remarks within the text of the preface and the pinax. For those titles in which no Greek transliteration is provided in Arabic sources, I have added the Greek equivalent in square brackets, mostly following HEIN's (1985) back translation (which is in turn based chiefly on BAUMSTARK 1900 and DÜRING 1957). The entries in the catalogue have been numbered as in **AB**; the paragraph numbering in parts I-III is my own.

Translation:

§0 In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.

A treatise by a man called Ptolemy, in which are [contained] Aristotle's testament, the catalogue of his writings and some information on him; [addressed] to a man called Gallus.

§1.1 Since I have remembered that you had told me that you would like to acquire³⁰ a book in which Aristotle's books are mentioned, and I immediately showed you what Andronicus from the city of Rhodes wrote about this, and you asked me to compose a book on this, a more succinct and clearer [one] as to [its] wording – I decided to compose this book for you.

§1.2 I refrained from mentioning the purpose (σκοπός)³¹ of Aristotle in his [various] texts (λόγοι) out of spite for prolixity and because I³² considered that, if I had done this, it [would be] superfluous. For you are the [kind of] man whose condition is not that of one who knows Aristotle's books in [all] their distinctions and with a preoccupation for the accuracy (ἀκρίβεια) of what is mentioned in them.³³

When the title is given straight-away, **B** alone sometimes adds a relative pronoun that creates a nominal sentence, thus yielding e.g. “his book that is on justice” rather than “his book *On Justice* (#4; also #5, #6, #13, #39, #41, #84, #97; not marked in the footnotes). Also, the direct transmission indicates the number of sections of a book with a *hāl*-clause (more or less equivalent to a Greek or Latin *participium coniunctum*, “being three sections”), while IaQ and IAU have the crude number and the word for “section(s)” follow. I opted for preserving the latter way of indicating them without any further remarks in the apparatus. As for IAU, he employs a ‘standard quotation format’ for all entries: “a book” followed by the title, a full stop and the indication of the number of sections; he also avoids periphrastic titles such as “a book in which he abridged Plato's account”, preferring to write “a book *On the Abridgement of Plato's Account*”. Hence, I have discarded IAU's readings from the footnotes when they clearly reflect his endeavour to systematise the catalogue and not original readings of *VPA*. Some peculiarities of the three recensions have already been indicated by DIETZE-MAGER (2015: 125-6).

³⁰ “you would like to acquire” corr., “he would like to acquire” **A**, “my remainder” **B**, “in meinem Besitze” corr. Hein.

³¹ The σκοπός is a technical term of prolegomena-literature and consists in a short exposition of the purpose of a certain work. In the case of Aristotle's writings, it was already dwelt upon by Andronicus, as it becomes clear from this passage; in Plato's dialogues, it mostly dealt with the double-titles of the kind Φαίδων ἢ περὶ ψυχῆς known since Thrasyllus (cf. below, ch. 8.1, 8.4).

³² “Because I” **AB**, “because” legg. Hein, Bonmariage, Wakelnig *ap.* DIETZE-MAGER (2015a: 105-6), “but” corr. Hein, “and now” corr. Daiber *ap.* D.-M.

³³ Ptolemy relativises his addressee's knowledge of the Aristotelian corpus in a harsh way, but I believe we should refrain from altering the text to yield a praise of Gallus rather than an honest assertion of his limited knowledge of the subject. *VPG* is ultimately intended as a *subsidiū* for those who approach the study of Aristotle and want to do so by following a sensible reading order (see below, ch. 8.1-2).

§1.3 As for what it is assumed³⁴ that its zealous pursuit³⁵ (σπουδή) in this book was helpful in freeing you from the need to³⁶ sort the books [yourself] according to their ranks, that is present in [the books] them[selves], and the matter concerning this is not hidden. There is no need for him who contemplates this that his acceptance of this [comes] from my remark³⁷ without occupying himself with understanding it.

[Paraphrase of §1.3 (cf. also ch. 8.1 below): The existence of a criterion for sorting the books in a pinax according to their ranks is assumed. If this criterion is followed zealously, it makes the reader free from having to re-sort the books himself [in a sensible reading order]. The criterion can be manifestly found in Aristotle's books themselves; therefore, one does not have to take my word for it without understanding how the sorting works.]

§1.4 For the ranks of the very same disciplines (τέχναι) about which the books are written have sometimes hindered the unwise³⁸ and even those who possess knowledge and understanding of their [i.e. the books'] sequence and order. The issue concerning this is not as some people think, [namely] that each discipline is independent in itself and that they do not follow each other, although this issue is correct when applied to the books of Plato, as many philosophers of his sect have done. But this [i.e. the order] is more firmly established in the books of Aristotle and you will [be able to] occupy yourself with the correctness of what I mentioned concerning the ranks of the books.

§1.5 And you [will] know that this book is a book that has come about with great care from my side, and it is a unique book. I have not resorted to anyone for the ordering; this is because Andronicus' book was not present in my [mind]³⁹. Therefore, your acquisition of this book of mine shall not prevent you from acquiring that one.

§1.6 Do not be astonished that Andronicus in his book enumerated some thousand texts and what we have mentioned is less than this. For if⁴⁰ we had preferred to mention all treatises attributed to Aristotle and attributed to Theophrastus, their number would not have been small.

§1.7 I begin with a concise account in which I mention Aristotle's life and information about him, and then I mention in it his testament, by which he disposed his testament at the time of his death, according to how it was reported to us, for you had asked me about this. Then, after this, I mention the catalogue of his books without explaining those books of his that have the character of an epitome⁴¹ of other [books], since this would have made an increase of the account and a prolongation necessary. If you [had] wished so, I would not have refrained(?) to take upon myself this [task] for you. If you are away from me, I will send it to you or inform you in case we meet. Let us begin with the account on the [matter].

§2.1 Aristotle originated from a city called Stagira, which is in the land called Chalcidice, which is adjacent to the land of Thracia; [Stagira is] close to Olynthus and Methone. He was the son of Nicomachus. His mother's name was /B 11v/ Hephaestia. Nicomachus was the physician of Amyntas, the father of Philip who was

³⁴ "he assumes/it is assumed" **A**, "he/it is hidden" **B**, "du [...] vermutest" corr. Hein.

³⁵ "its zealous pursuit" **A**, "orientation" **B** (the latter being ungrammatical as missing the necessary ending).

³⁶ "was helpful in freeing you from the need to" **A** (with an editorial addition of one dot), "corresponds to your wish from" **B**.

³⁷ "his assent to this from he who says" **A**, "this saying of his from my saying", **B** "dessen Auffassung braucht nicht der meinen zu entsprechen" Hein, "to say the same as I do" Wakelnig, who also translated "beyond his occupation etc." instead of "without his occupation".

³⁸ "hindered the unwise" corr., "hindered the making free" **A**, "N-Q-F(? not a word) the concerned" **B**, "der Bemühungen von seiten der Menschen ermangelt" corr. Hein.

³⁹ The Arabic seemingly implies that Ptolemy did not have Andronicus' book at hand but this would collide with his assertion in §1.1. Wakelnig's translation, which has been adopted here, solves the problem.

⁴⁰ "For if" **A**, lit. "because and" **B**, "weil wir es vorgezogen haben, sämtliche dem Aristoteles und dem Theophrast zugeschriebene Abhandlungen zu erwähnen, deren Anzahl nicht gering ist" Hein, "because we preferred to mention all treatises attributed to Aristotle, and those attributed to Theophrastus their number was not small" Wakelnig.

⁴¹ "an epitome" **A**, "creation/generation" **B**, "are being found/genrated [*sic*] from others" Wakelnig.

Alexander's father. [Nicomachus] belonged to the offspring (γένος) of Asclepius, and his lineage [could] be traced back from the offspring of Asclepius to Nicomachus son of Machaon⁴², son of Asclepius. Hephaestia's origin too [could] be traced back in its lineage to Asclepius.

§2.2 It is said that when his father Nicomachus died⁴³, he entrusted his son's matter⁴⁴, who happened to be young, to Plato. Some people said {that the entrustment of Aristotle to Plato came about because of an oracle of God Almighty in the temple of Pythion. Others said}⁴⁵ that it came about because of [the] friendship existing between Proxenus – Aristotle's paternal grandfather⁴⁶ – and Plato.

§2.3 It is said that he spent twenty years studying ["in studies"], and when Plato left for Sicily for the second time Aristotle became his successor in the house of studies called Academy; and that when Plato came back from Sicily Aristotle relocated to the Lyceum and founded there a house of studies devoted to the Peripatetic philosophers.

§2.4 Then, when Plato died, he relocated to Hermias the Slave, who was the ruler of Atarneus⁴⁷. Then, when this Slave died, he returned to Athens, and Philip sent for him. He went to him in Macedonia and stayed there teaching until Alexander travelled⁴⁸ to the country of Asia. Then he made Callisthenes his successor in Macedonia, returned to Athens and spent ten years teaching in the {Lyceum}.

§2.5 Then a man among the priests called hierophants, who was called Eurymedon, wanted to slander Aristotle. He charged him with blasphemy, [claiming] that he did not worship the idols that were adored in that time, out of the hatred that there was in his [i.e. Eurymedon's] soul. Aristotle recounts this story in his book [i.e. letter] *To Antipatrus*.

§2.6 When Aristotle heard about this, he left Athens for his home country, Chalcis, because he loathed [the fact] that the people of Athens were attempting to do with him [lit. "from his matter"] as they attempted to do with Socrates [lit. "from the matter of Socrates"], so that they [eventually] killed him.

§2.7 His departure happened without anyone urging him⁴⁹ to leave after receiving the writing of the hierophant or inflicting discomfort on him.

§2.8 {What}⁵⁰ is said about Aristotle composing an apology for his {spiteful}⁵¹ [accusation] on the part of the hierophant is not true; [this] is rather something contrived after what he uttered [on that occasion; lit. "after his tongue"].

§2.9 When Aristotle arrived in his country, he dwelt there for the rest of his life until he died aged sixty-six.

§2.10 It is clear from what we have mentioned concerning his circumstances that the account of those who allege that he only studied philosophy after having reached thirty years [of age] and that up to that point he had pursued the management of cities (πολιτεία) out of his concern for improving the affairs of the cities is false.

§2.11 It is said that the people of Stagira transferred his body from the place where he died to their territory [lit. "to themselves"] and brought him to a place called 'Aristotelic' (Ἀριστοτέλειον, cf. **T8.1-3**) and held in that place their assembly for deliberating on the most important matters and what worried them. For it was Aristotle who laid down the laws of Stagira for its people.

⁴² "son of Machaon" om. **B**.

⁴³ "It is said that when" om., "died" replaced by "to" **B**.

⁴⁴ "his son's matter" **A**, "his two wives" **B**.

⁴⁵ {...} om. **AB**, add. from IAU (segment partially preserved in IaN too)

⁴⁶ "Aristotle's paternal grandfather" **AB**, om. IAU.

⁴⁷ This is my correction, as none of the extant Arabic sources provides a satisfactory transliteration of Atarneus.

⁴⁸ "travelled to" corr., "returned to" **AB**.

⁴⁹ "urging him" **A**, "more adequate" **B**.

⁵⁰ "What" om. **AB**, add. from IAU.

⁵¹ "spiteful" corr. after IAU, "proximity" **B**, "saying" **A**.

§2.12 He was held in great esteem by the people [lit. “he had great value among the people”]. Clear⁵² signs of this are the honours [bestowed upon him] by the kings⁵³ who {lived at his time. As for}⁵⁴ his desire to bring about the good and [his] solicitude and performance of good deeds for the people, this is clear from his letters and writings. He who looks into them can read of his great mediation in the affairs involving the kings of his time and the common people, by which he improved their [i.e. the latter’s] matters and repeatedly benefitted⁵⁵ them.

§2.13 Because of the abundance of the favours and good deeds he effected in this domain, the people of Athens proceeded to hold an assembly and agreed to write an inscription they engraved on a stele made of stone and placed on the high citadel {in the city}⁵⁶, called highest⁵⁷ [part] of the city (Ἀκρόπολις). In what they wrote on the stele, they mentioned [the following]:

§2.14 ‘Aristotle son of Nicomachus, from the people of Stagira, has earned [this] by bringing about good, much help and favours, by what the people of Athens have been allotted [of his good deeds] and by his taking a stand [for them] before king Philip, through which their situation has improved. He made good deeds arrive upon them [so] that the assembly of⁵⁸ the people of Athens praised him for the beautiful [things] that came from this⁵⁹ and acknowledged his virtue [lit. “him with virtue”], [his] performance of good deeds and [his] leadership, and made it necessary to preserve and guard his memory [lit. “him”]. {Who among those in leading positions does not consider him worthy [of these honours] shall pursue his [path] after him and take a stand for them [i.e. the people of Athens] concerning all}⁶⁰ the needs and matters they request.”

§2.15 A man among the people of Athens called Himeraeus⁶¹, after the people of Athens had decided what they decided concerning this inscription, parted from their decision and stated the contrary to what they said concerning the matter of Aristotle. He rushed to the stele on which {the people of Athens had agreed}⁶² to write {the praise} they wrote {and that they had erected on the place called the highest [part] of the city}⁶³, and threw it down from its place. After {having done}⁶⁴ what he had done, Antipatrus seized and killed him.

§2.16 Then, a man among the people of Athens called Stephanus, along with a group [of people], put up a stele made of stone and wrote on it a praise of Aristotle like [the one] that there was on the first stele, and recorded along with it [i.e. with the praise] a mention of Himeraeus, {who had thrown down the stele, and of the deed he [had] done, and they made it necessary to curse him and be exempted(?)⁶⁵ from him}⁶⁶.

§2.17 When Philip died and Alexander became king after him and left his country to fight [other] nations and travelled to the country of⁶⁷ Asia, Aristotle proceeded to retire into a life of isolation [from] and relinquishing⁶⁸ of the connections he had with the affairs of kings and the relations with them.

⁵² “Clear” **B**, “laws” **A**.

⁵³ “by the kings” om. **A**.

⁵⁴ {...} om. **AB**, add. from IAU.

⁵⁵ “repeatedly benefitted” **A**, “informed the benefits” **B**.

⁵⁶ {...} om. **AB**, add. from IAU.

⁵⁷ “highest” **A**, “people” **B**.

⁵⁸ “the assembly of” om. **A**.

⁵⁹ “from this” om. **A**.

⁶⁰ {...} om. **AB**, add. from IAU.

⁶¹ Himeraeus, Demetrius of Phaleron’s brother, was a prominent anti-Macedonian who was indeed killed by Antipatrus in 322 (cf. HAAKE 2006: 342-3).

⁶² {...} om. **AB**, add. from IAU.

⁶³ “the praise”, {...} om. **AB**, add. from IAU.

⁶⁴ {...} om. **AB**, add. from IAU.

⁶⁵ “Indemnität” STEINSCHNEIDER (1869: 198), “Reinigung (*scil. der Stadt*)” (BAUMSTARK 1900: 48).

⁶⁶ {...} om. **AB**, add. from IAU.

⁶⁷ “travelled to the country of” **A**, “returned to what/because” **B**.

⁶⁸ “relinquishing” **A**, “revelation” **B**.

§2.18 He went to Athens and set up the place of studies {we have mentioned}⁶⁹ before, which was devoted to the Peripatetic philosophers, and dedicated himself to caring for the welfare of the people, supporting the wretched and the poor, [helping] {to marry}⁷⁰ the widows [off], supporting the orphans, caring {for their education}⁷¹ and fostering those who sought to study and educate themselves, of whichever status they were and whichever kind of discipline and formation they pursued, helping and encouraging them in this⁷², [carrying out] acts of beneficence towards the poor and raising the welfare of the cities. He [also] restored the buildings of the city called Stagira. {He never stopped being utmost}⁷³ gentle and modest and happy⁷⁴ to meet the humble and the great, the powerful and the weak.

§2.19 As for his support for the affairs of his friends, this cannot be [possibly] described; what the biographers wrote and their unanimity concerning the information they wrote on Aristotle and his life shows this.

§2.20 If we examined the account concerning the good things he [did] and his noble character, the account would become long. We shall rather limit ourselves to this [lit. “to this extent of its totality”].

§3.1 When death came upon him after this beautiful life, he disposed the following testament, which we quote. He said:

§3.2 “I hereby make Antipater my testamentary executor forever [*sic*]⁷⁵ for everything that I leave behind. Until Nicanor returns, Aristomenes, Timarchus, Hipparchus and Dioteles shall take care {of examining}⁷⁶ what needs to be examined and caring for what should be cared about as to the matter of my family, Herpyllis – my servant –, my other girl-servants, my male slaves and what I leave behind. If it is convenient and possible for Theophrastus to join them in this, he shall do so.

§3.3 When my daughter comes of age, her matter shall be entrusted⁷⁷ to Nicanor. Should she die before marrying, or after that [but] without having children⁷⁸, the matter shall revert to Nicanor <

>⁷⁹ of {both}⁸⁰ her matter and that of my son Nicomachus. My instructions for him concerning this are that the managing of what he does happens according to what he wishes and seems proper to him, as if he were a father or a brother to them.

§3.4 Should Nicanor die before⁸¹ my daughter is married off, or after she has been married off [but] without having children, Nicanor shall [have] made dispositions in his testament concerning what I left, and that [testament shall be] lawful and legally valid.

§3.5 Should Nicanor die without [leaving] a testament, and should it be convenient for Theophrastus and should he be willing {to replace}⁸² him in the matter, the replacement on his part shall involve [“this [shall happen] for him”] everything that Nicanor would have been concerned with as to the affairs of my child [or: “children”] and the other things that I left behind.

⁶⁹ “we have mentioned [scil. it]” **AB**, “we have mentioned it” corr. after MiF, IAU. “it” left out in the English.

⁷⁰ “in marrying” **AB**, corr. after MiF, IAU.

⁷¹ {...} corr. after IAU, without dots **A**, garbled **B**.

⁷² “encouraging them in this” om. **A**.

⁷³ {...} corr. after IAU, “he used on the people” **AB**.

⁷⁴ “happy” **A**, “ways of life” **B**.

⁷⁵ A translation error for διὰ παντός, cf. below, ch. 6.3.

⁷⁶ “of examining” corr. after IaN IAU, without one dot **A**, “he examines” **B**.

⁷⁷ “shall be entrusted” **A**, “my saying” **B**.

⁷⁸ “children” **A**, “a follower” **B**.

⁷⁹ post DL lacunam statui (cf. ch. 6.3), cf. fn. 272.

⁸⁰ “both” om. **AB**, add. from IaN IAU.

⁸¹ “before” **A**, “if? [interrogative]” **B**.

⁸² “to replace” (lit. “that he replaces”) corr. after IaN, IAU, without dots **A**, “that she replaces” **B**.

§3.6 Should Theophrastus not be willing⁸³ to be concerned with this, then the executors I have mentioned shall depend on Antipatrus and seek his advice on what they should do⁸⁴ concerning what I left behind, and carry out the matter as they have agreed with him.

§3.7 The executors and Nicanor are to take care of Herpyllis for me – as she has earned this from me since I have recognised her great care in serving me and her diligence in what was convenient for me⁸⁵ – and allocate to her everything she needs. If she would like to marry, she shall not be given to anyone but⁸⁶ a virtuous man, and she shall be given [a quantity of] silver, beside what she [already] has, amounting to one talent – which is 125 pounds –⁸⁷ and three female slaves of her choice along with the servant [lit. “her servant that”] she has and her male slave. If she wants to abide in Chalcis, she shall dwell in my home, in the house of accommodation which is⁸⁸ next to the garden. If she prefers to dwell in the city of Bastagira [*sic*], she shall live in [one of] the residences of my fathers, whichever residence she prefers. The executors shall arrange for her what I have mentioned, [that is], what she needs [and what] they see is advantageous to her and she is in need for.

§3.8 As for my family and children, there is no need for me to dispose their protection and the care for their matter.

§3.9 Nicanor shall take care of Myrmex the slave, so that he returns [him] to his country and with him everything he [i.e. Myrmex] has, in the manner he desires.

§3.10 My servant Ambracis {shall be set free}⁸⁹. If, after the manumission, she wants to enter the service of my daughter⁹⁰ until she gets married, she shall be given 500 drachmas⁹¹ and her female servant.

§3.11 Thales shall be given⁹² the girl that we have recently acquired, a male servant from my possession and 1000 drachmas.

§3.12 Simus shall be given [money] equivalent to the male servant {that he can buy}⁹³ for himself, and a further slave for whom he has already paid the price; he shall pay an additional amount [lit. “an amount other than this”] according to what the executors deem appropriate.

§3.13 When my daughter gets married, my slaves Tachon, Philon and Olympius shall be set free.

§3.14 Olympius' son shall not be sold, nor anyone [else] among the male servants in my service. Rather, they shall remain slaves in servitude until {they come of age as}⁹⁴ men. If they reach this, they shall be set free. What they are given, must be done according to what they deserve.”

⁸³ “should [he] not be willing” **A**, “if he does not have to” **B**.

⁸⁴ “should do” **A**, “should know” **B**.

⁸⁵ “was convenient for me” **A**, garbled **B**, “was sie mir passend einrichtete” perperam corr. OVERWIEN (2014: 773 fn. 37).

⁸⁶ “but” om. **B**.

⁸⁷ DÜRING's (1957: 240) suggestion that the gloss “120 Roman pounds [*sic*] [...] is probably an addition by Andronicus, who wrote his book in Rome”, is off the mark. The most likely scenario is that the gloss was derived from Epiphanius of Salamis' *De ponderibus et mensuris*, a work discussing the units of measures used in the Bible and preserved in Greek and Syriac but never translated into Arabic; hence, it must have stood in the source text of *VPA* and should not be bracketed. Epiphanius equated the Biblical Hebrew *kikkar* with a *τάλαντον*, in compliance with the Septuagint translation, and proposed the equivalence 1 talent = 125 pounds (l. 771 *τάλαντόν ἐστι τὸ ὑπερβάλλον πᾶν σταθμιζόμενον μέτρον, κατὰ δὲ τὸν λιτρισμόν ρκε' λιτρῶν ὑπάρχει*). The gloss in *VPA* may therefore go back to a Syrian or Greek speaking Christian who mistook Aristotle's Classical *τάλαντον* for the Biblical *τάλαντον* or *kikkar*. A different origin is unlikely as the equivalence 1 talent = 125 pounds is alien to the Classical system 1 talent = 60 minas (on which cf. HITZL 2006) and I could not find any Islamic measure of weight said to be equivalent to 125 pounds (or *raṭls* in Arabic).

⁸⁸ “which is” om. **B**.

⁸⁹ “shall be set free” corr. after IaN IAU, “he/she” etc. **A** (om. diacritical dots), “and to the neck” **B**.

⁹⁰ “the service of my daughter” **A**, “my service” **B**.

⁹¹ “dinars” add. before “drachmas” **AB**, del. after IaN IAU.

⁹² “shall be given” **A**, “rises” **B**.

⁹³ “he can buy” corr. after IaN IAU, without dots **A**, garbled **B**.

⁹⁴ “they come of age as” corr. after IaN IAU, “they reach the degree of” **AB**.

§4 As for Aristotle's books, they are the following:

- #1 His book that exhorts to [engage with] philosophy. Three sections.⁹⁵ It is called in Greek ῥητορικῆς φιλοσοφίας [sic].
- #2 His book known as Σοφιστής (*Sūfistīs*). A single section.
- #3⁹⁶ His book *On the Discipline of Rhetoric*⁹⁷. Three sections.
- [VPG 1-3a: BAUMSTARK (1900: 97) assumed that some confusion was already present in the Greek exemplar of the Syriac translation and reconstructed προτρεπτικὸς α' περὶ φιλοσοφίας γ' περὶ ῥητορικῆς γ' σοφιστῆς α', where α' περὶ would have been dropped thus giving rise to #1 προτρεπτικὸς (or -οῦ) φιλοσοφίας γ', which is reflected in the Arabic "his book that exhorts to engage with philosophy". IaQ or his exemplar later lost the separate entry devoted to the *Rhetoric* and moved the surviving part of the transliteration, namely ῥητορικῆς, to the first entry.]
- #4 His book *On Justice*. It is called in Greek περὶ δικαιοσύνης. Four sections.
- #5 His book *On the Exercise and Education Improving the Conditions*⁹⁸ of Man in His Soul. It is called in Greek περὶ παιδείας. Four sections.
- #6 His book *On the Nobility of Birth*. It is called in Greek περὶ εὐγενείας. Five sections.
- #7 His book *On Poets*⁹⁹. Three sections. [= περὶ ποιητῶν]
- #8 His book *On Sovereignty*. It is called in Greek περὶ βασιλείας. Six sections.
- #9 His book *On the Good*. It is called περὶ ἀγαθοῦ. Five sections.
- #10 His book called Ἀρχύτας (*Arkhūtas*). Three sections.
- #11 His book in which he talks /A 186v/ *About the Lines That*¹⁰⁰ *Are Not Divisible*¹⁰¹. It is called περὶ τῶν ἀτόμων γραμμῶν. Three sections.
- #12¹⁰² His book *On What the Attribute of Justice Pertains To*¹⁰³. It is called περὶ δικαίων. Four sections.
- #13¹⁰⁴ His book *On Difference and Divergence*. It is called περὶ διαφορᾶς. Four sections.
- #14 His book *On the Matter of*¹⁰⁵ *Love*. It is /B 13r/ called ἐρωτικῶν¹⁰⁶. Three sections.
- #15 His book *On Forms*¹⁰⁷, *Whether They Exist or Not*. It is called περὶ εἰδώλων. Three sections.
- #16¹⁰⁸ His book in which he abridged Plato's account on laws¹⁰⁹. Two sections. [= ἐπιτομὴ τῶν Πλάτωνος νόμων]
- #17 His book in which he abridged Plato's account on governing the cities. It is called [scil. ἐπιτομὴ τῆς] Πλάτωνος πολιτείας. Five¹¹⁰ sections.

⁹⁵ "being three sections" **B**, *vacat* **A**, the latter with a partially trimmed marginal note. In the catalogue, 'section' renders *maqāla*, that is, a single book as part of a larger work.

⁹⁶ om. IaQ

⁹⁷ *al-rīṭūrīqī* **AB**, *al-rīṭūrī* IAU.

⁹⁸ "obligations" **A**.

⁹⁹ "poets" **B**, "poetry" **A**.

¹⁰⁰ "that" IaQ, "whether they" **AB** IAU.

¹⁰¹ "not divisible" **AB** IaQ, "divisible or not" IAU.

¹⁰² this entry om. **A**.

¹⁰³ "what" and "pertains to" om. IAU.

¹⁰⁴ This entry om. **A**.

¹⁰⁵ "the matter of" om. IAU.

¹⁰⁶ Genitives without περὶ occur when they were found in this form in the Greek original (e.g. ἐρωτικῶν γ' vs. #2 σοφιστῆς α')

¹⁰⁷ "forms" **B**, "relationship by marriage" **A**.

¹⁰⁸ This entry om. IaQ.

¹⁰⁹ "on laws" om. IAU.

¹¹⁰ "five" **AB** IAU, "two" IaQ.

- #18¹¹¹ His book in which he abridged Plato's account [on pleasure. #19 His book]¹¹² *On Politics*. Two sections.
[= ἐπιτομή τοῦ Πλάτωνος Πολιτικοῦ?]
- #20 His book¹¹³ *On Pleasure*. It is called περὶ ἡδονῆς. Two sections.
[VPG: 20a. <His book ... called θαυμάσια ἀκούς?>]σματα.¹¹⁴
- #21 His book *On Movements*. It is called περὶ κινήσεων. Eight sections.
- #22 His book called *On Mechanical Problems*. It is called μηχανικὰ προβλήματα. Two sections.
- #23 His book *On the Discipline of Poetry According to the Sect of Pythagoras and His Followers*¹¹⁵. Two sections. [περὶ ποιητικῆς τέχνης and περὶ τῶν Πυθαγορείων?]¹¹⁶
- #24 His book *On Spirit*. It is called περὶ πνεύματος. Three sections.
- #25 His book¹¹⁷ he labelled¹¹⁸ *On Problems*. It is called προβλήματα. Three sections.
- #26 His book¹¹⁹ he labelled *On the Nile of Egypt*. It is called περὶ τοῦ Νείλου. Three sections.
- #27 His book *On Animals' Occupation of the Places They Occupy in Order to Find Shelter*¹²⁰ and Hide¹²¹ in Them. It is called περὶ τοῦ φωλεύειν. A single section.
- #27a¹²² A book of his¹²³ whose name is¹²⁴ *The Whole of Disciplines*. It is called [περὶ]¹²⁵ τεχνῶν συναγωγή. One section.
- #28 His book¹²⁶ he labelled *On Affection*. It is called <περὶ> φιλίας. Three sections.
- #29¹²⁷ His book known as κατηγορίαι (*Qāṭīghūriyās*), being the first [book] on logic¹²⁸. One section.
- #30¹²⁹ His book known as περὶ ἐρμηνείας, being the second book on logic¹³⁰. One section.
- #31¹³¹ His book known as ἀναλυτικά¹³². Two sections. [= ἀναλυτικά πρότερα]
- #32¹³³ His book known as τοπικά, being eight sections. /B 15v/
- #33 His book known as ἀποδεικτικά¹³⁴. Two sections. [= ἀναλυτικά ὕστερα]
- #34 His book *On Sophists*¹³⁵. A single section. [= σοφιστικοὶ <ἐλεγχοί>]

¹¹¹ This entry om. IaQ.

¹¹² "on pleasure. His book" AB, "on pleasure in his book" IAU. Secluded as it seems to be an interpolation from the following entry. DÜRING (1957: 223) took the entry to reflect two different abridgements of works by Plato, namely the *Philebus* and the *Statesman*.

¹¹³ "his book" om. A.

¹¹⁴ Based on the garbled transliteration from Greek, BAUMSTARK (1900: 95) inferred that two titles were conflated already in the Greek and restored 20a., a title respecting the alphabetical order and also found in VH. "two sections" in #20 is found in AB and IAU only.

¹¹⁵ "discipline of", "and its adherents" om. IAU.

¹¹⁶ As DÜRING (1957: 244) indicated, this may be a conflation of two titles (for the latter of which there are in numerous fragments, cf. GIGON §987: 408-419).

¹¹⁷ "his book" AB, "a book of his" IaQ.

¹¹⁸ "labelled" IaQ IAU, "marked" AB.

¹¹⁹ "his book" B, "his book [[known]]" A, "a book of his" IaQ.

¹²⁰ "in order to find shelter" A, "for us" B.

¹²¹ "hide" AB, "be" IaQ; "and hide in them" om. IAU.

¹²² This entry om. AB.

¹²³ "a book of his" IaQ, corr.

¹²⁴ "on" add. IAU.

¹²⁵ transposui infra.

¹²⁶ "his book" AB, "a book of his" IaQ.

¹²⁷ This entry om. IaQ.

¹²⁸ "being the first [book] on logic" om. IAU.

¹²⁹ This entry om. B.

¹³⁰ "being the second book on logic" om. IAU; "on logic" om. AB.

¹³¹ post #33 transp. IAU.

¹³² "which is deductive reasoning" add. IAU.

¹³³ This entry om. IaQ.

¹³⁴ "which is demonstration" add. IAU.

¹³⁵ "sophists" AB IaQ, "sophistry" IAU.

#35 His book he labelled¹³⁶ *The Great Treatises*¹³⁷ on Ethics. It is called ἠθικῶν μεγάλων. Two sections.

#36 His book he labelled *The Small Treatises on Ethics*, that he wrote to Eudemus¹³⁸. It is called ἠθικῶν Εὐδημείων. Eight sections.

[*Ethica Nicomachea desiderantur*. It is impossible to determine at what stage the entry went lost.]

#37 His book *On Governing*¹³⁹ Cities. It is called πολιτικῶν. Eight sections.

#38¹⁴⁰ His book *On the Discipline of Poetry*. Two sections. [= περὶ τέχνης ποιητικῆς]

#38a¹⁴¹ His book *On the Discipline of rīṭūrī*, that is, *Rhetoric*¹⁴². Three sections. [= περὶ τέχνης ῥητορικῆς]

#39¹⁴³ His book *On the Lecture* ["hearing"] on Nature. Eight sections. [= φυσικὴ ἀκρόασις]

#40¹⁴⁴ His book *On the Heaven and the Cosmos*. /A 187r/ Four sections. [= περὶ οὐρανοῦ]¹⁴⁵

#41 His book *On Generation and Corruption*. Two sections. [= περὶ γενέσεως καὶ φθορᾶς]

#42 His book *On Upper Phaenomena*. Four sections. [= μετεωρολογικά]

#43 His book *On the Soul*. Three sections. [= περὶ ψυχῆς]

#44 His book *On Sense and Sensibilia*. A single section. [= περὶ αἰσθήσεως καὶ αἰσθητῶν]

#45 His book *On Memory and Sleep*. A single section. [= περὶ μνήμης, περὶ ὕπνου and others, see ch. 8.2]

#46 His book *On the Movement of Animals and Their Anatomy*. It is called κινήσεως τῶν ζῴων ἀνατομῶν [sic]. Seven sections.

[VPG: #46 is a conflation of two titles, namely *Mot. an.* and the fragmentarily preserved *Anatomy of Animals* (cf. BAUMSTARK 1900: 76)]

#47 His book *On the Natures of Animals*. Ten sections. [= περὶ ζῴων ἡθῶν i.e. *Nat. an.*]

#48 His book that he labelled *On the Parts Through Which Is Life*. It is called ζωικῶν μορίων. Four sections.

[VPG: most likely an error in the Greek template for ζῴων μορίων, *Parts of Animals*.]

#49 His book *On the Generation of Animals*. It is called περὶ ζώων γενέσεως. Five sections.

#50 His book *On the Movements of Animals Living*¹⁴⁶ on Earth. It is called περὶ πορείας. A single section.

#51 His book /B 16r/ *On the Length of Life of Animals and Its Brevity*. A single section. [= περὶ μακροβιότητος καὶ βραχυβιότητος]

#52 His book *On Life and Death*. A single section. [= περὶ ζωῆς καὶ θανάτου]

#53 His book *On Plants*. Two sections. [= περὶ φυτῶν]

#54¹⁴⁷ His book *On What is After Nature*¹⁴⁸ Thirteen sections. [= τὰ μετὰ τὰ φυσικά]

#55 His book he labelled *Material Problems*. A single section. [ἀπορήματα ὑλικά]

#56 His book he labelled *Natural Problems*. Four sections. [ἀπορήματα φυσικά]

¹³⁶ "he labelled" A, "he marked" B.

¹³⁷ "treatises" IaQ IAU, "sayings" AB.

¹³⁸ "that he wrote" om. IAU; "Eudemus" garbled in AB.

¹³⁹ "governing" B, "defining" A.

¹⁴⁰ This entry om. IaQ.

¹⁴¹ This entry om. AB.

¹⁴² "that is, rhetoric" om. IAU.

¹⁴³ cf. al-Mas'ūdī, *Kitāb al-Tanbīh wa l-ishrāf* 120.12-5 "[Aristotle] mentioned this in the first section of his book *On the Lecture on Nature* and also in its eight section, [the work] being eight sections."

¹⁴⁴ cf. al-Mas'ūdī, *Kitāb al-Tanbīh wa l-ishrāf* 120.15 "his book *On the Heaven and the Cosmos*, being four sections".

¹⁴⁵ The peculiar title may indicate a conflation of *De caelo* and the pseudepigraphic *De mundo*, but this is unlikely as *De caelo* is actually in four books and also circulated under the title Latin title *De caelo et mundo*.

¹⁴⁶ "living" A, "being" B.

¹⁴⁷ cf. al-Mas'ūdī, *Kitāb al-Tanbīh wa l-ishrāf* 120.16 "his book *On What is After Nature*, being thirteen sections".

¹⁴⁸ "[[a single section]]" A.

- #57 His book he labelled¹⁴⁹ *Divisions*. Twenty-six sections. He mentions in this book the parts of time, the parts of the soul, the parts of¹⁵⁰ impulse, the matter of the agent, patient and act¹⁵¹ and the matter of¹⁵² affection, the genera of the good things and what of them is reasonable, what of them¹⁵³ in the soul and what of them is away from the soul; he mentions the matter of goodness and badness; he mentions the genera of the sciences, the genera of movements and the genera of what speech pertains¹⁵⁴ to, the genera of creatures and that [i.e. the criterion] according to which one divides [lit. "it is divided"].¹⁵⁵ It is called διαίρεσεις.
- #58 His book he labelled¹⁵⁶ *Plato's Divisions*. Six sections. [= διαίρεσεις Πλάτωνος?]
- #59 His book he labelled *Division of the Conditions That Impose Conditions in Speech and participates [in it]*¹⁵⁷. Three sections. [= ?]
- #60 His book he labelled *On the Refutation of the Opinion That the Premises*¹⁵⁸ *of the Antithesis Are Taken From the Same Utterance*. It is called ἐπιχειρήματα. Thirty-nine sections.
- #61¹⁵⁹ His book he labelled *On the Counterargument*¹⁶⁰, called ἐ<ν>στασις¹⁶¹. Twelve¹⁶² sections.
- #62¹⁶³ His book he labelled *Book of the Theses*¹⁶⁴, /B 16v/ being thirty-four sections. [= θέσεις]
- #63 His book he labelled *Theses Concerning Love*. It is called θέσεις ἐρωτικά<ι>. A single section.
- #64 His book he labelled *Theses Concerning Nature*. It is called θέσεις φυσικά<ι>. A single section.
- #65 His book whose title is *List*¹⁶⁵ *of Theses*. It is called θέσεων ἀναγρα<φή>. A single section.¹⁶⁶
- #66 His book he labelled¹⁶⁷ *Book of the*¹⁶⁸ *Definitions*. It is called ὅροι. Sixteen sections.
- #67 His book he labelled¹⁶⁹ *On Things That Define*. It is called ὀριστ<ικ>ά. Four sections.
- #68 His book he labelled¹⁷⁰ *On Topical (tūbīqī) Definitions*¹⁷¹. A single section. [= ὅροι πρὸ τῶν τοπικῶν]
- #69 His book he labelled *On Setting Definitions Applied in Topics (tūbīqā)*¹⁷². It is called πρὸς ὅρους τοπικῶν. Three sections.

¹⁴⁹ add. "on" IAU.

¹⁵⁰ "the parts of" AB IaQ, "and" IAU.

¹⁵¹ "and act" om. AB.

¹⁵² "the matter of" AB IaQ, "and" IAU.

¹⁵³ "of them" om. B.

¹⁵⁴ "pertains" A, "is useful" B.

¹⁵⁵ "the genera of the good things... it is divided" AB IaQ, "the genera of animals, the matter of the good, the bad and the movements, and the genera of the creatures" IAU. On the Greek model of this sketch of the work's content, see below, ch. 6.4.

¹⁵⁶ "on" add. IAU.

¹⁵⁷ "and participates [in it]" IaQ IAU, "and the condition" AB.

¹⁵⁸ add. "for decrease" B.

¹⁵⁹ This entry om. IaQ.

¹⁶⁰ "counterargument" B, "soul" A.

¹⁶¹ "called ἐνστασις" IAU, om. AB.

¹⁶² "thirteen" AB.

¹⁶³ This entry om. IaQ.

¹⁶⁴ "his book... theses" AB, "a book on theses" IAU.

¹⁶⁵ "list" IaQ IAU, "house" B, ** A.

¹⁶⁶ "a single section" om. IaQ.

¹⁶⁷ "his book he labelled" om. A.

¹⁶⁸ "book of the definitions" AB, "on definitions" IaQ IAU.

¹⁶⁹ "labelled" A, "marked" B.

¹⁷⁰ "labelled" A, "marked" B.

¹⁷¹ "on topical definitions" AB IaQ, "on defining topics (tūbīqā)" IAU.

¹⁷² "applied in topics" AB IaQ, "of topics" IAU.

- #70 His book he labelled *Book of the*¹⁷³ *Theses Through Which Definitions Are Set*. It is called πρὸς ὅρους θέσεων [ἐπιχειρήματα]¹⁷⁴. Two sections.
- #71¹⁷⁵ His book he labelled *Contradictions of*¹⁷⁶ *Definitions Through the Definitions*¹⁷⁷. <It is called ... ἐπιχειρήματα>. Two sections.
- #72¹⁷⁸ His book he labelled *On Setting Definitions Through Definitions*. Two sections.
- #73¹⁷⁹ His book he labelled *Definitions*¹⁸⁰, that Theophrastus used for the *Analytics*¹⁸¹. A single section. [= ?]
- #74 His book he labelled *On Setting the [Act of] the Defining*. It is called πρὸς τοὺς ὀρίσμούς. Two sections.
- #75 His book he labelled *Book of the Problems*. It is called προβλήματα. Eighty-eight¹⁸² sections. /B 17r/
- #76 His book he labelled *Introductions*¹⁸³ to the Problems. It is called προβλημάτων προαγορευ<ομένων>. Three sections.
- #77 His books he labelled *General Problems*, used by students. It is called προβλήματα ἐγκύκλια. Four sections.¹⁸⁴
- #78 His book he labelled *Book of the Precepts*. It is called παραγγέλματα. Four sections.
- #79 His book he labelled *Book on*¹⁸⁵ *Notes*. It is called ὑπομνήματα. Two sections.
- #80 His book he labelled *Problems of the Species in Medicine*. It is called προβλήματα †...† ιατρικά. Five sections.
- #81 His book he labelled *On the Regimen*¹⁸⁶ of Diet. It is called περὶ διαίτης. A single section.
- #82 His book he labelled *On Agriculture*. Ten sections.¹⁸⁷ It is called γεωργικῶν.
- #82a His book *On Wet Things*. A single section.¹⁸⁸ [= περὶ ὑγρῶν]
- #83 His book *On Dry Things*. A single section.¹⁸⁹ [= περὶ ξηρῶν]
- #84 His book *On General Accidents*. A single section.¹⁹⁰ [= “περὶ τῶν κατὰ φύσιν συμβαίνοντων <γ’>?” Hein]
- #85 His book he labelled *On Upper Phaenomena*. Three sections.¹⁹¹ [= περὶ μετεώρων? μετεωρολογικά?]
- #86 His book *On the Reproduction of Animals*. Two sections.¹⁹² [= ?]
- #87 His book with the same designation, from(?) the causes of agriculture¹⁹³. /A 188r/ Two sections. It is called γεωργικῶν.

¹⁷³ “book of the” IaQ, “on” IAU, om. AB.

¹⁷⁴ transposui infra.

¹⁷⁵ This entry om. IaQ.

¹⁷⁶ “of” B, “by” A.

¹⁷⁷ “contradictions of (by A) definitions through the definitions” AB, “on criticising definitions” IAU.

¹⁷⁸ This entry om. IaQ IAU.

¹⁷⁹ This entry om. IaQ.

¹⁸⁰ “definitions” AB, “on the discipline of defining” IAU.

¹⁸¹ “for the Analytics” AB, “in the Prior Analytics” IAU.

¹⁸² “eighty-eight” AB, “sixty-eight” IaQ, “twenty-eight” IAU.

¹⁸³ “introductions” IaQ, “on introductions” IAU, “the road of what belong” AB.

¹⁸⁴ “used by students. It is called προβλήματα ἐγκύκλια. Four sections” IaQ, being four sections. It is called προβλήματα ἐγκύκλια, general, which are [“is” B] used for students” AB, “that students use. Four sections” IAU.

¹⁸⁵ “book on” om. AB.

¹⁸⁶ “regimen” IaQ IAU, “species” AB.

¹⁸⁷ “ten sections” om. AB.

¹⁸⁸ “his book on wet things. A single section” restitui, “to this [i.e. *On Agriculture*] belong: his account on wet things. A single section” AB, “to this belong: his account on wet things” IaQ, “a book on wet things” IAU.

¹⁸⁹ “his book on dry things” AB, “the section he labelled on dry things follow this” IaQ, “a book on pulse” IAU.

¹⁹⁰ “three sections” IAU, “a single section” AB; “one section he labelled on general accidents follows this” IaQ.

¹⁹¹ “three sections” AB, “two sections” IAU; “three sections he labelled on upper phaenomena follow this.”

¹⁹² “his book... two sections” AB IAU, “two sections he labelled on the reproduction of animals follow this” IaQ.

¹⁹³ “his book with the same designation, from(?) the causes of agriculture” AB, “another book on the reproduction of animals. two sections” IAU, “[a book] with the same designation follow this, two sections” IaQ.

[VPG #82a-86: possibly interpolated within the Greek transmission, as they disrupt the alphabetical order and #87 seems to immediately follow #82 just like #89 follows #89.]

#88 His book he labelled *On Premises*¹⁹⁴. Twenty-three¹⁹⁵ sections. [= προτάσεις]

#89 His book with the same designation, but it is /B 17v/ on other premises. Seven sections.¹⁹⁶ [= προτάσεις]

#90¹⁹⁷ His book he labelled *Constitution[s] of the Cities*¹⁹⁸. It is called πολιτικά. This is a book in which are mentioned¹⁹⁹ the constitution[s] of many nations and cities among the <nations and>²⁰⁰ cities of the Greeks and others and their laws²⁰¹; the number of nations and cities that he mentioned²⁰² is 171. [= πολιτεῖαι]

#92 His book²⁰³ he labelled *Notes*²⁰⁴. It is called ὑπομνήματα. Sixteen sections.

#93 Another book²⁰⁵ similar to that. A single section.

#94 His book he labelled *Another Book on Contradictions*²⁰⁶. It is called ἐπιχειρημάτων. A single section.

#95 His book he labelled *Another Book*²⁰⁷ *on Predication*²⁰⁸. It is called περὶ τ<οῦ πρό>ς τί. A single section.

#96 His book he labelled *Another Book*²⁰⁹ *on Time*. It is called περὶ χρόνου. A single section.

#97 The books²¹⁰ that were found in the library of a man called Apellicon.²¹¹

[VPG: #97 may be a heading for the following entries (cf. HEIN 1985: 435).]

#98 A book of his he labelled²¹² *Other Notes*²¹³ [read *Other Notes*]. [= ὑπομνήματα]

#99 A²¹⁴ book in which a man called Artemon collected²¹⁵ letters by Aristotle. In²¹⁶ eight parts. [ἐπιστολαί]

#99a A book of his *On the Laws*²¹⁷ *of the Cities*. Two sections. [= περὶ πολιτείας?]

#100 And letters by him²¹⁸ that Andronicus found, in²¹⁹ twenty parts. [ἐπιστολαί]

¹⁹⁴ “faculties” B.

¹⁹⁵ “twenty-three” AB IAU, “thirty-three” IaQ.

¹⁹⁶ “his book... other premises” AB, “it follows this [a book] with the same designation, but it is on other premises” IaQ, “another book on other premises” IAU.

¹⁹⁷ Cf. al-Mas’ūdī, *Kitāb al-Tanbīh wa l-ishrāf* 78.11-4 “his book he labelled *Constitution[s] of the Cities*, being the book in which he mentioned the constitution[s] of many nations and cities among the nations and cities of the Greeks and others; it is called in Greek πολιτικά, and the number of nations and cities that he mentioned is 170.”

¹⁹⁸ “his book he labelled governing cities” IaQ, His book he labelled on governing cities, being [*vacat* A, no number B] sections” AB, “a book on governing cities and the number of nations” IAU.

¹⁹⁹ “this is a book in which are mentioned” IaQ “91. His book in which he mentioned” AB; “this is a book... 171” repl. “he mentions in it 171 large cities” IAU.

²⁰⁰ add. from al-Mas’ūdī.

²⁰¹ “laws” A “cause” B, “relations” IaQ.

²⁰² “he mentioned” B IaQ, “are mentioned” A.

²⁰³ “his book” B, “a book” A, “a book of his” IaQ.

²⁰⁴ “notes” AB IaQ, “on various notes” IAU.

²⁰⁵ add. “of his” A.

²⁰⁶ “another book” om. IAU.

²⁰⁷ “another book” om. IAU.

²⁰⁸ “predication” A IaQ IAU, “predications” B.

²⁰⁹ “another book” om. IAU.

²¹⁰ “the books” IaQ, “his book on the laws of cities, being two sections. And the books...” AB (transposed here from 99a), “books of his” IAU.

²¹¹ add. “in the number of several volumes” IAU.

²¹² “he labelled” om. B.

²¹³ “other notes” AB, “on notes” IAU, “by other mention” IaQ.

²¹⁴ “large” add. IAU.

²¹⁵ “a number of” add. IAU.

²¹⁶ “in” om. IAU.

²¹⁷ “laws” AB IAU, “tales” IaQ.

²¹⁸ “and letters by him” AB, “and other letters” IaQ, “letters” IAU.

²¹⁹ “in” om. IAU.

#100a²²⁰ And books²²¹ in which are notes not sent forth to the people. Their number and beginnings are found in the fifth section of Andronicus' book /B 18r/ *On the Catalogue of Aristotle's Books*.

[VPG: τὸν ἄριθμον <τῶν στίχων> Hein fort. recte]

#101 And²²² his book *On Problems From the Difficult Meanings*²²³ of Homer's Poetry, in²²⁴ ten parts²²⁵. [= ἀπορήματα Ὀμηρικά]

#102 And his book in which he gathered *Definitions of Medicine*.²²⁶ It is called <...> ἱατρικῆς.
End. [Religious formulas.]

5. History of research

Much ink has been spilled on *VPG* and *VPA*. For obvious reasons, the following survey of secondary literature only addresses the most important original contributions dealing with *VPG-VPA* as a whole. Shorter works devoted to single sections or aspects of it shall be discussed in their place in the course of our study.

Research up to the 1890s focussed especially on retrieving, editing and translating quotes from *VPG* and *VPA* found in the indirect transmission. It is noteworthy that by that time, the impressive efforts of Classicists and Graeco-Arabists had already identified and discussed almost all sources included in the corpus presented in ch. 2-3: IaN, MiF, IaQ, IAU, VM, VV, VL, DL and VH.²²⁷ Subsequent discoveries were limited to the *Vita Syriaca II*, VA's Syriac version (BAUMSTARK 1900) and its Greek source text (REINSCH 1982); MS B (Ritter *apud* KRAUS 1944); MS A (MAR'ASHI 2003: 313-4); and MiF's 'third source' and the fragments of part IV *apud* al-Mas'ūdī (this thesis; cf. fn. 231 and ch. 2.6 respectively).

²²⁰ Not marked as a new entry in AB. IAU replaces it with "A number of books in which are notes. Their number and names are [found] in Andronicus' book *On the Catalogue of Aristotle's Books*."

²²¹ add. "of his" AB.

²²² "and" AB, om. IaQ IAU.

²²³ "meanings" AB, om. IaQ IAU.

²²⁴ "in" IaQ, om. AB IAU.

²²⁵ "parts" AB, "sections" IaQ IAU.

²²⁶ "and his book in which he gathered definitions of medicine" AB, "his book on the whole definition of medicine" IaQ, "a book on interesting topics in medicine" IAU.

²²⁷ The pertaining texts were edited in the following order: CASIRI 1760: 306-8; 310-2 (part IV from IaQ, Arabic with Latin paraphrase); WENRICH 1842: 142-58, 237 (part IV, Arabic and German, with notes; notes on T12.2); STEINSCHNEIDER 1867: 1469-73 (part IV from IaQ and IAU, Latin translation; a discussion of T1.1 by Rose in the introduction to the translation); STEINSCHNEIDER 1869: 186-207 (part II and part III from IaQ and IAU, German translation; part II from the Medieval Latin translation of MiF; occasional comparison with VM, VV, VL, DL, VH); MÜLLER 1873 (part II and part III from IaQ, German translation); MÜLLER 1875 (part IV from IaQ and IaQ, Arabic with Greek back translation); LITTIG 1890: 38-42 (part IV, Greek back translation); DRERUP 1898 (§2.14 from IAU, Greek back translation).

The early stages of research on *VPA* also saw several attempts at identifying its author. Again, all identifications ever contemplated in scholarship had already been proposed by 1889;²²⁸ later scholars argued in favour of this or that solution but never produced new texts as evidence.²²⁹

The link between *VPG* and the Greek and Latin *Vitae* was first made by STEINSCHENEIDER (1869), but it was BUSSE (1893) who undertook an extensive comparison with the newly available translations of *VPA*. Crucially, he was able to trace *VM* and *VV* to the Neoplatonic milieu in Alexandria by highlighting parallel passages in Olympiodorus and others (pp. 264-5; 271-4). Points made by Busse and later invalidated in scholarship are (i) that *VM* was the immediate source of *VV* (pp. 254-259, cf. DÜRING 1957: 139), and (ii) that *VPG* was *VM*'s "Hauptquelle" (p. 262, cf. PLEZIA 1975: 42). The latter claim was possible as Busse compared *VM* with *VPA*'s indirect transmission in a rather arbitrary way and ascribed to *VPG* all passages in the two sets of sources that remotely resembled each other (pp. 262-268). But the mention of Proxenus of Atarneus or the description of Aristotle's relations to Plato (p. 267) in both *VM* and *VPA* is not sufficient proof that the former drew on *VPG* for those passages, and the same applies to the segments found both in *VM* and David which Busse likewise ascribed to Ptolemy's original (pp. 264-6).

During the late 19th c., most Arabic sources quoting *VPA* finally became available in monumental critical editions, thus replacing previous editions of *VPA*'s fragments based on two MSS at best.²³⁰ The improved accessibility of the Arabic sources enhanced the potential of research on *VPA* and more in general on the biographical tradition on Aristotle. LIPPERT (1894) undertook a thorough comparison of the indirect sources²³¹ and discovered that *VPA* was translated from Greek into Arabic

²²⁸ WENRICH (1842: 237) identified him with the Peripatetic namesake mentioned in **T15.2**. ROSE (1854: 45) opted for the Platonist mentioned in **T14.1-2**. ZELLER (1862: 42-3 fn. 1) pleaded for an identification with the Peripatetic namesake of **T15.1**. MÜLLER (1875: 23) showed that the name of Ptolemy's addressee must be read as Gallus. CHRIST (1889: 357 fn. 1) and his student LITTIG (1890: 19 fn. 4) surmised that Ptolemy's Arabic epithet *al-Gharīb* "the stranger; the unknown" goes back to a misreading of Πτολεμαῖος Χέννος as Ξένος on the part of the *VPA*'s translator; this would make the paradoxographer from 1st c. AD Alexandria the author of *VPG*. With the exception of Littig's, none of the mentioned identifications of Ptolemy provided positive arguments beyond the identical name of the respective authors.

²²⁹ See the full discussion in ch. 8.6 below. PLEZIA (1975) represents a partial exception in that he did not produce new text-based evidence but argued that Ptolemy is not to be identified with any other namesake known from ancient sources. The present thesis is the first work in 130 years to introduce new evidence in support of a different identification (see ch. 8.6.5).

²³⁰ IaN: FLÜGEL (1871-1872); IAU: MÜLLER (1884); IaQ: LIPPERT (1903).

²³¹ Including MiF (edited and translated for the first time on pp. 4-19). Lippert came to the conclusion that MiF's main sources were *VPA* and a lost Neoplatonic biography, later identified by GUTAS (1986: 28) as the lost full version of the *Repository of Wisdom* (*Šiwān al-Hikma*), an important collection of philosophical material partially stemming from Late Antiquity. The work only survives in an abridgement, the *Abbreviation* (*Muntakhab*) by Abū Sulaymān al-Sijistānī (ed. DUNLOP 1979). GUTAS (1986: 29) called for a comparison between the *Abbreviation* and the fragments from the fuller versions preserved by MiF, but a study of this kind is still a desideratum. Interestingly, some hitherto unnoticed notes by al-Dawānī on ff. 172r-v of MS A contain some sections of a biography of Aristotle clearly related to the material in MiF and the *Abbreviation*. If we are to take seriously what is stated at its beginning, it was originally contained in the work of a philosopher whose name is garbled but may tentatively be reconstructed as Olympiodorus; the source is said to have been translated from Syriac into Arabic, and in the following line there occurs the name of "Sergius the physician", that is, Sergius of Rēsh 'Aynā (d. 536), the most important figure of the early Greek into Syriac translation movement. The biography covers Aristotle's pedigree and etymology of his and his father's name; his early education in grammar and

via a lost Syriac intermediary, as two syriacisms in the Arabic text make plain.²³² The suggestion of a Syriac intermediary is a very good one and was later built upon by BAUMSTARK (1900: 14), who drew attention to a Syriac-into-Arabic translation error in *VPA*.²³³ A further hint at an intermediary has gone unnoticed so far: in two occurrences in *VPA*, the word for “Athens” was directly transliterated from Syriac rather than given in its usual Arabic form.²³⁴

The upward trajectory of late 19th c. research on *VPA* culminated in the monography by Baumstark just mentioned, a true masterpiece of *Quellenforschung* with all its merits and deficiencies. Baumstark introduced reliable translations of the Arabic sources as well as critical editions and translations of two brief Syriac *Lives* (*VA* and the so-called *Vita Syriaca II*, see above, ch. 2.4) he had discovered. Crucially, he identified three main channels of transmission from Greek into Arabic via Syriac; this suggestion may turn out to be correct in view of our discovery of what is possibly an independent MS of the third branch (see fn. 231).

Inaccuracies on the part of Baumstark are only found *within* his reconstructions of the single branches. Concerning the transmission of *VPA*, he inferred that *VA* must be a Greek epitome of *VPG* that was later translated into Syriac; this because it agrees to a large extent with *VPA*'s fragments *apud* IaN, MiF, IAU and IaQ (pp. 34-6). But two paragraphs in *VA* are not matched in the Arabic

poetry and later in the quadrivium; his studies under Plato – by whom he was taught personally, as opposed to all other pupils who studied with Xenocrates; his relocation to the Lyceum upon Plato's death, while Xenocrates continued teaching Platonism in the Academy; and finally, the etymology of the name “Peripatetics”. This biography is surely of Neoplatonic origin: many philosophers and biographers of late Alexandria undertook efforts to harmonise Plato's and Aristotle's philosophy (cf. below, ch. 6.2), a tendency clearly reflected in the idealisation of the relationship between Plato and his pupil Aristotle in the biography discussed. Furthermore, there are clear reference to the curriculum of studies that established itself in Late Antiquity (trivium and quadrivium) and was taught in the Alexandrian Academy. MiF and the *Abbreviation of the Repository of Wisdom* combine this material with an anecdote about the young Aristotle defending the poets from their detractors Epicurus and Pythagoras (*sic*), which is missing in the newly discovered biography. I am preparing a paper on this source.

²³² The ἱεροφάντης Eurymedon (cf. DL V.58) is described in Arabic as “a man among the priests (*al-kahana*) that are called the *kumriyyīn*(?)” (§2.5). According to Lippert, this must render a “the ἱερεῖς called ἱεροφάνται” or the like. Assuming that *VPG* had been first translated into Syriac, the words chosen for ἱερεῖς and ἱεροφάντης would have been *kāhnā* “sacrificing priest” and *kumrā* “non-Christian priest” respectively. The Syriac intermediary would have been later translated into Arabic and the two syriacisms preserved by choosing an Arabic work derived from the same Semitic root in one case (Ar. *kahana*, Syr. *kāhna*), and by creating a neologism based on the Syriac in the other (Ar. *kumriyyīn* with the Syr. stem *kumr-*, the Ar. derivative suffix *-iyy-* and the Ar. masculine plural ending *-īn*). Lippert's reconstruction is correct but it should be noted that “a man among the ἱερεῖς called ἱεροφάνται” would have been very clumsy Greek. It is more likely that the Greek simply had “ἱεροφάντης”; the Arabic “among the priests called the *kumriyyīn*” possibly goes back to a Syriac free rendering of a single Greek word.

²³³ Baumstark's argument pertains the Arabic transliteration of Aristotle's birth-place, Στάγειρα. The Greek toponym is usually rendered as *astaghayrā* (the *anlaut a-* being an epenthetic vowel) in *VPA*'s fragments, but one reads *fī l-madīna bāstaghayrā* “in the city of Bāstaghayrā” in §3.7. This mistake can be explained if one takes a Syriac intermediary into account where, according to Syriac usage, the order of “city” and “Stageira” was swapped and the Arabic local preposition *fī* substituted by *bā*, thus yielding *bā-stageyrā madittā*. Baumstark inferred that a dittography of the preposition *bā* had taken place in Syriac and an Arabic translator mechanically translated the passage by taking the second *bā* to be the part of the name of the city.

²³⁴ The toponym occurs twelve times: §2.4 twice, §2.6 twice, §2.13, §2.14 twice, §2.15 thrice, §2.16, §2.18 and is given in its standard Arabic form *athīnya*, except in §2.4 where we find *athīnus*, which is a calque on the Syriac *āṭīnūs*. Hence, the translator has first followed Syriac usage in rendering the name of Athens but later switched to the more genuine Arabic form. It is also possible that the Syriac form was used throughout and an early redactor *VPA* failed to notice all instances where it occurred and change them.

fragments; he regarded this as proof that *VPG* only made it into Arabic in an abridged version. His guess was that the abridgment was made by Ishāq b. Hunayn (d. c. 910-1 in Baghdad), a celebrated translator and scholar proficient in Greek, Syriac and Arabic. He would have included it in his *History of the Physicians* (*Ta'rikh al-aṭibbā'*), an Arabic source used elsewhere in the works of IaN, MiF, IAU and IaQ and not yet retrieved at the time of Baumstark was writing (pp. 32-4).

Baumstark proceeded to reconstruct a more articulate stemma of the transmission (p. 36). IaQ is younger than IaN and his excerpts from *VPA*, parts II-III do not mention anything that is not in IaN's text; hence, IaQ must be depending on him (cf. above, ch. 2.3). In order to explain the differences between IAU on one part and MiF and IaN on the other, Baumstark claimed that they were not relying on Ishāq's actual text but rather on two different sets of mediating sources that had abridged the abridgement.

Consequently, IAU would ultimately have its pinax from Ishāq. The question is why IaQ, who was otherwise relying on IaN, also preserves a recension of it. Baumstark explained this by assuming that two different versions of the pinax circulated in Arabic: a version by Ishāq that was transcribed by IAU via an intermediate source; and a fragmentary pinax, which IaQ likewise had from an intermediary. The two versions chiefly diverge in that the latter only preserves Arabic transliterations of the Greek titles of Aristotle's books; the few instances where IAU likewise has a transliteration should be explained as contamination (cf. pp. 53-60).

From this brief survey, it appears that a major shortcoming in Baumstark's approach was his tendency to posit the existence of a lost intermediate source whenever the surviving ones (IaN, MiF, IaQ and IAU) diverge at the level of their wording or of the sections they quote. In doing so, Baumstark was denying the four authors any originality. Divergences could be more easily explained by assuming that (i) each of them made a different selection of material from *VPA*, and that (ii) when they quoted the same passage, the respective wordings slightly differs because the text taken from *VPA* was redacted rather than mechanically copied from different intermediate sources.

Indeed, Baumstark's stemma started to crumble when lost texts to which he had granted the status of intermediate source were retrieved in MSS: none of them turned out to contain Ptolemaic material.²³⁵ Even more importantly, the hypothesis that *VPA* never reached Arabic in an independent and full form was invalidated by H. Ritter's (*apud* KRAUS 1944) discovery of a direct Arabic

²³⁵ The supposed source from which IaQ would have his pinax (Ibn Juljul, *Generations of the Physicians*) was retrieved and edited by SAYYID (1955); no catalogue of Aristotle's writings compatible with the one by Ptolemy is found in it. Both Ishāq's *History of Physicians* (cf. ROSENTHAL 1954) and one of the supposed intermediate sources between him and MiF, IaN and IaQ (Ibn Suwār's *Way of Life of the Philosopher*, cf. Lewin 1954-1955) turned out not to contain Ptolemaic material. Based on second-hand reports on Ibn Suwār's work, LIPPERT (1904) had already argued that it did not discuss Aristotle's life even before the text itself was retrieved.

transmission represented by MS **B**. It appears that IaN, MiF, IaQ and IAU all had access to independent MSS of *VPA*, as their quotes agree by and large with the text of the direct transmission.²³⁶

The faults in Baumstark's reconstructions also make it necessary to revisit the question of the relation between *VPG-VPA* and *VA*. As will be shown below (ch. 6.2), *VA* preserves several word-for-word agreements with the Arabic, which means that indeed, it could be a direct epitome of *VPG*; the two extra chapters found in *VA* and not in *VPA* are possibly additions by a Neoplatonist rather than segments lost in the Arabic transmission.

The second and to date last monography on Ptolemy and the biographical tradition on Aristotle, DÜRING (1957), was a work of mixed value.²³⁷ The more successful part of Düring's work is an account of the Greek and Latin tradition based on fresh editions of a number of sources (*DL*, *VH*, *VM*, *VV*, *VL*, *Vita Lascaris*, and a number of Medieval *Vitae*) and on an impressive collection of reports on Aristotle scattered in Classical literature; these sections unquestionably testify to the erudition and philological ability of this scholar. Serious flaws are concentrated in the chapter devoted to the Syriac and Arabic sources such as *Vita Syriaca II*, the Syriac version of *VA*, IaN, MiF, IaQ and IAU, which he presented in English translation.²³⁸ From there, they spread to the rest of his book.

One would have expected Düring to actively engage with BAUMSTARK's (1900) reconstruction of the transmission and correct it on the base of fresh evidence that had meanwhile turned up (see above). Instead, Düring simply dismissed some of his conclusions as "far-reaching" (p. 187) and asserted that

²³⁶ As for the second branch of the transmission reconstructed by Baumstark (pp. 105-17), it encompasses the material found in IaN, MiF, IAU and IaQ and seemingly unrelated sources such as the *Vita Syriaca II* and various other Arabic authors (Ibn Khaldūn and al-Shahrastānī to name two). According to Baumstark, all these excerpts must ultimately go back to a common Greek source translated into Syriac in full. The *Vita Syriaca II* would represent an abridgement of that Syriac text, while Ibn Khaldūn and al-Shahrastānī used an anonymous Arabic biography based on the fuller Syriac version. The immediate source of IaN, IAU and IaQ would be the very same source they relied upon for their *VPA* material, namely Ishāq's *History of Physicians*, in which were included not only excerpts from the full Syriac version of *VPG* but also from a Syriac translation of second source. MiF's text slightly departs from IaN, IAU and IaQ's in this case, which would point to an intermediate source other than Ishāq. Baumstark believed that MiF used al-Rāzī's *Philosophical Life*, a work not yet retrieved at that point, in which the second source would have been merged with a third branch of the transmission represented by a Neoplatonic biography not attested elsewhere in the corpus at his disposal (pp. 126-8). This reconstruction must be corrected on several levels. On Ishāq's *History of Physicians*, which turned out not to contain any reference to Aristotle, see the previous footnote. Al-Rāzī's *Philosophical Life* was later discovered in a MS and turned out not to contain anything Aristotle-related (cf. KRAUS 1935). The source merging material from the second and third branch was identified by GUTAS (1986: 28) as the full version of the *Repository of Wisdom*, and a biography preserving a text of the third branch may be contained in MS **A** (see above, fn. 231).

²³⁷ My discussion of DÜRING (1957) is influenced by GUTAS's (1986) polemic review. Although the latter is impeccable in its content, one cannot help but notice that Gutas could have done without ridiculing Düring as an amateur whose work had sadly been taken for serious by gullible Classicists. As Gutas himself conceded (p. 18), Düring's work had been meanwhile criticised by a fellow Classical philologist such as PLEZIA (1975), who despite being wont of far-reaching conclusions as to Ptolemy's identification (see below, ch. 8.4), did not underestimate the complexity of the Semitic transmission.

²³⁸ cf. GUTAS (1986: 33 fn. 9, 35 fn. 33) for the substandard quality of Düring's translations from Arabic. As for the Syriac, his translation of *VA* contains at its end two additional paragraphs not found in the original text. REINSCH (1982: 111 fn. 11) noticed that these paragraphs match an extract from IAU found after *VA* in BAUMSTARK's (1900: 49) synoptic German translation of *VPA*'s testimonies. Clearly, Düring overlooked the change of text in Baumstark's translation, which resulted in the incorporation of a portion of IAU's text into his translation of *VA*. We can deduce that Düring was translating from German rather than from Syriac, despite asserting to have do so on p. 187.

he regarded his articulated stemmata and reconstructions of the Greek-into-Arabic transmission “with great scepticism” (p. 192). In fact, he opted for a much more simplistic reconstruction; not being aware of the already retrieved MS **B** and thus ignoring the actual content of *VPA*, he came up with an ill-advised rule of thumb for assigning material to his reconstruction of *VPG*: “every detail in the various [Arabic] accounts of Aristotle's life is either (a) derived from Ptolemy's work (including additions from the prolegomena) or (b) a fictitious addition made in the Syriac or (most probably) Arabic transmission” (p. 191). The immediate inference from this aprioristic assumption is that any piece of information found both in Greek and Arabic or Syriac cannot belong to class (b) and must therefore go back to *VPG*.

This put Düring in the position to arbitrarily ascribe to *VPG* many more pieces of information than the direct witnesses of *VPA* contain. In some instances, he even inflated his reconstruction by arbitrarily tracing Arabic reports to it without any backing from Greek or Latin sources.²³⁹ This resulted in a reconstruction of *VPG* including passages that stay in plain contradiction to each other and could never have been part of the same source in the first place.²⁴⁰ As the reconstructed chimera resembled *VM*, *VV* and *VL* much more than *VPG* actually did, Düring went on to claim that the three Neoplatonic *Vitae* stemmed from a common source representing an abridgement of *VPG*.

In sum, whereas Baumstark's work underestimated the active rôle of Arabic compilers and therefore produced overly intricate stemmata of the transmission, Düring underestimated the complexity of the Graeco-Arabic transmission itself, which heavily bore on his investigation of *VPG*, its features and its relationship with the late antique *Vitae*. While the former work was hardly read or quoted, the latter was canonised as a textbook on the subject with negative repercussions on subsequent research.²⁴¹

It is clear where the way out of the impasse was: MS **B**.²⁴² PLEZIA (1975) had a colleague prepare an unpublished Polish translation (p. 38) and proceeded to compare the Greek and the Arabic tradition on the base of new evidence. His conclusion relativised Düring's findings: “quae cum ita sint, luce clarius apparet, quanto in errore versati sint omnes [...], qui affermavissent Ptolemaei librum

²³⁹ E.g. IaN §7 Düring, MiF §§14-16, §22 Düring (cf. the respective notes *ad loc.*).

²⁴⁰ DÜRING (1957: 472-4) sums up the supposed content of *VPG*. On the internal contradictions in this reconstruction, see GUTAS (1986: 21) with cross-references within his paper.

²⁴¹ CHROUST (1973) is probably the best example for a work taking Düring at face value and pushing his conclusions even further; see GUTAS (1986: 32 fn. 6; 34 fn. 15) with literature. Düring's work is still occasionally quoted as an authority in contemporary research, e.g. FLASHAR (2011: 2); LIMONE (2018: 394-5). HATZIMICHALI (2013: 19-27) has a discussion of Andronicus' pinax and edition which suffers from endorsing Düring's reconstruction of the relation between Andronicus and Ptolemy (“the author [scil. Ptolemy] claims to be summarising Andronicus' work on the catalogue of Aristotelian writings” (p. 19); this is of course incorrect in view of Ptolemy's statements in part I).

²⁴² DÜRING (1971) stated in a later work that the MS had been brought to his attention by Muḥsin Maḥdī; he claimed that evidence retrieved from it corroborates his previous findings, whereas in reality, it shatters them. For instance, he reported that the MS contains a gnomological section (p. 269), which would support his previous assumption that *VPG* likewise did contain one. But in no place in **B** is such a section found.

principalem fontem fuisse eorum, quae de Aristotele in vitis tribus infima antiquitate conscriptis: Marciana, Vulgata, Latina traderentur" (p. 42).

MS **B** also preserves a section previously unknown to scholars, namely Ptolemy's preface to Gallus. This part and the pinax were edited by HEIN (1985), who exploited information found in it to challenge the common assumptions that Ptolemy based his own pinax on Andronicus' and that Ishāq b. Hunayn was VPA's translator.²⁴³

GUTAS (1986), who was unaware of Hein's work, published shortly thereafter a ferocious review of DÜRING (1957) and made the case that competent *Quellenforschung* ought to be brought back into play if the issues concerning the transmission of VPG and especially VPA were to be solved once and for all (pp. 18-9). At the same time, he warned against the pitfalls of old-fashioned, positivistic undertakings such as intricate reconstructions of the transmission that fail to take all variables into accounts; this critic was addressed to Baumstark in particular (p. 16). Gutas also sketched a method of research to be applied by the future editor of VPA²⁴⁴ and conveniently indicated the provenance of every single report on Aristotle's life in the known Arabic biographies (including VPA from MS **B**; pp. 23-7).

Thus, by 1986, the state of affairs was such that the issue of VPG-VPA could have been easily settled once and for all: previous scholarly works had been competently reviewed and an ecdotic strategy for VPA clearly laid out. What followed instead was a long winter of derivative studies on VPG-VPA that often repeated or amplified Düring's mistakes.²⁴⁵ Only HAAKE (2006) on §§2.13-16 and the classic PRIMAVESI (2007) and TARÁN & GUTAS (2012: 15-25, 31) on Andronicus and part IV stand out as excellent original contributions in this period.²⁴⁶

Some light was finally seen not long ago, when DIETZE-MAGER published a detailed review of literature on VPG-VPA and related topics (2015) and a study of Ptolemy's preface to Gallus based on a new transcription of MS **B** (2015a). The review is well-informed and discusses several topics we could not dwell upon, such as the supposed rediscovery of books of Aristotle on the part of Apellicon of Theos and Andronicus' edition thereof (pp. 98-108), the individual character of the different antique and Semitic biographies of Aristotle (pp. 108-120) and the features of Andronicus' pinax (pp. 145-157; but see below, ch. 6.4, 8.1-2 *passim*). The sections devoted to the remaining issues (transmission, features, author and date of VPG-VPA) have been rectified and built upon in the present

²⁴³ The title of the *Physics* in VPA is given in a form that was replaced by a newer one in Ishāq's own translation of the Aristotelian work (pp. 407-8); see below, ch. 6.5. On Ptolemy and Andronicus, see below, ch. 8.1.

²⁴⁴ pp. 28-9. As explained in the introduction to the translation, I tried to follow Gutas's instructions in my edition.

²⁴⁵ See above, fn. 241. OVERWIEN (2014) is much aware of the state of the transmission and of the difficulties of a cross-investigation of DL's and Ptolemy's testament of Aristotle but still proceeds to a comparison solely based on the outdated edition of IAU by Müller. The final word on the testament is yet to be said (see ch. 6.3, ch. 7).

²⁴⁶ But Primavesi's conclusions have been summarily criticised by PERKAMS (2019: 463 fn. 79).

thesis. The study of *VPA*, part I (2015a) shall be referred to further below in its proper place (especially ch. 6.4 and 8.1).

6. *VPA's relation to VPG*

As discussed above (ch. 5), the presence of a handful of syriacisms in *VPA* indicates the existence of a lost Syriac intermediary between the Greek and the Arabic. This channel of transmission was a common one for Greek philosophical and related texts (D'ANCONA 2011). The Greek and Syriac versions being irremediably lost, the question of *VPA's* faithfulness to its source texts arises.²⁴⁷ The issue is central to our endeavour, as only an Arabic translation faithful to its source text(s) can serve as foundation for our contextualisation of Ptolemy's work against the background of the Greek scholarly tradition on Aristotle (ch. 7-8).

Generally speaking, there are two ways of determining *VPA's* relation to its source texts. The first one is a comparison with external evidence in the form of testimonies of *VPG* scattered in the Greek and Latin tradition. The second is an internal investigation of *VPA* that could betray the spurious character of some sections, or the omission or abridgement of others. It goes without saying that the first approach yields more solid results and shall be applied whenever possible. Parts I-IV shall be discussed separately. At the beginning of each section, the pertinent original texts are found;²⁴⁸ bold typeface signals word-for-word agreement with the Arabic, whereas italics (roman in the case of Latin texts) point to divergences in related passages.

6.1. PART I AND T1-2

VPA §0 "A treatise by a man called Ptolemy, in which are [contained] Aristotle's testament, the catalogue of his writings and some information on him; [addressed] to a man called Gallus."

²⁴⁷ In the case of translations from lost templates carried out by Ḥunayn b. Ishāq (d. 873), his son Ishāq (d. c. 910-1) and their circle, a high degree of faithfulness can mostly be taken from granted, as their translations of extant Greek texts show how they always skilfully managed to overcome the difficulties inherent to such an endeavour (cf. GUTAS 2017: 106-7). But the same cannot be assumed *a priori* in the case of *VPA*: the text may well have been translated by one of Ḥunayn's many predecessors (cf. below, ch. 6.5), about whose translation technique much less is known. Furthermore, the possibility exists that *VPA* or its source texts had been abridged or expanded in the course of their transmission (for Baumstark's position on the issue, see above, ch. 5). HEIN (1985: 396) contemplated the possibility that *VPA* had been shortened because the Alexandrian source of al-Kindī's *On the Number of Aristotle's Books* had suffered precisely this fate. DIETZE-MAGER (2015: 113 with fn. 81) rightly regarded Hein's argument as unfounded because in the case of al-Kindī, it was the author's intention to only discuss the classification of selected works by Aristotle found in his source and therefore omitted others; *VPA's* catalogue, on the other hand, aims for completeness. But even though Hein's argument is not valid, the possibility that *VPA* was shortened or expanded remains.

²⁴⁸ Testimonies pertaining to a single section of the Arabic text are grouped under the same T-number while each also receives an individual number, e.g. **T1.1**, **T1.2**, **T1.3** are three different texts pertaining to §0, **T2.1**, **T2.2**, **T2.3** to §1.6, etc. **T1-2** are discussed in ch. 6.1, **T3-10** in ch. 6.2. **T11-16** concern the identification of Ptolemy and are placed at the beginning of the relevant sub-sections of ch. 8 below.

T1.1 David (olim Elias), *In Cat.* 107.7-14 (= Düring 75 p 3) δέκα δέ τισι κεφαλαίοις περικλείομεν τὴν αὐτοῦ [scil. Ἀριστοτέλους] φιλοσοφίαν. [...] δεύτερον τίς ἡ διαίρεσις τῶν Ἀριστοτελικῶν **συγγραμμάτων** πολλῶν ὄντων χιλίων τὸν ἀριθμόν, ὥς φησι **Πτολεμαῖος ὁ Φιλάδελφος**²⁴⁹ <ὁ> **ἀναγραφὴν** αὐτῶν ποιησάμενος καὶ τὸν βίον αὐτοῦ καὶ **τὴν διαθήκην**²⁵⁰.

T1.2 VM 191-4 καὶ τελευτᾷ ἐκεῖσε [scil. ἐν Χαλκίδι] **διαθήκην** ἔγγραφον κατα<λιπών>, ἣ φέρ<ε>ται <παρά> τ<ῷ> Ἀνδρον<ίκῳ> τε καὶ **Πτολεμαίῳ** μετὰ <τοῦ> **πίνα<κος> τῶν>** αὐτοῦ <συγγρα>**μμάτων** <...>.²⁵¹

T1.3 VL 46 *et mortuus est in Chalcide dimittens testamentum scriptum quod fertur ab Andronico et Ptholomeo cum voluminis suorum tractatum.*

VPA §1.6 “Andronicus in his book enumerated some thousand texts”

T2.1 (= **T1.1**) David (olim Elias), *In Cat.* 107.11-3 (= Düring 75 p 3) τίς ἡ διαίρεσις τῶν Ἀριστοτελικῶν **συγγραμμάτων** πολλῶν ὄντων **χιλίων τὸν ἀριθμόν**, ὥς φησι **Πτολεμαῖος ὁ Φιλάδελφος** [...].

T2.2 David (olim Elias), *In Cat.* 113.17-9 (= Düring 75 p 1): δεύτερον ἦν κεφάλαιον τῶν προτεθέντων τὸ εἰπεῖν τὴν διαίρεσιν τῶν Ἀριστοτελικῶν **συγγραμμάτων χιλίων ὄντων τὸν ἀριθμόν**, ὥς **Ἀνδρόνικος** παραδίδωσιν ὁ τούτου²⁵² ἐνδέκατος γενόμενος διάδοχος.

T2.3 VL 48 ... *tractatus autem mille numero* [scil. *Aristotiles dimisit*].

Evidence on the Greek title of *VPG* comes from the opening sections of David's (2nd half 6th c.) *Commentary on the Categories*. The participial clause in **T1.1** closely follows the title of *VPA* as given in the Arabic MSS (τὸν βίον for “some information on him” being a minor divergence). Hence, it is clear that David based the sentence on the actual title of *VPG*. The testimony also allows to establish that no major section once present in *VPG* went lost on its long trip eastward, as part II, part III and part IV are all referenced in the Greek. The Neoplatonic *Vitae* mention explicitly parts III and IV in **T1.2-3**, but as we shall see below (ch. 6.2.1-2, 4-8), they knew and used part II as well.

As for Ptolemy's epithet “Philadelphus” in **T1.1**, this can only be David's misguided attempt at identifying Ptolemy: *VPA* refers several times to Andronicus of Rhodes, who is posterior to any ruler of the Ptolemaic dynasty. DÜRING (1957: 419) rightly saw that David took *VPG*'s Ptolemy to be Ptolemy Philadelphus as some pages later, he recounts an anecdote concerning this king's effort to gather books by Aristotle (128.6; cf. also KUPREEVA 2018: 258). If David was forced to guess who the mysterious author of *VPG* was, this must mean that by the 6th c., the work was circulating under the name of a mere “Ptolemy” (as we read in **T1.2-3** and *VPA*).

David also quotes a piece of information he had from §1.6, namely the overall number of writings by Aristotle. That Ptolemy reckoned Aristotle's books to be one thousand is, however, a misquotation, as §1.6 ascribes this piece of information to Andronicus. Some pages later (**T2.2**), David refers once more to the issue, this time correctly ascribing its discussion to Andronicus. From this peculiar

²⁴⁹ Φιλάδελφος codd., defendit DÜRING (1957: 419) : φιλόσοφος Rose

²⁵⁰ διαθήκην Rose : διάθεσιν codd.

²⁵¹ e VL impl. lacc. Gigon in notis ad loc.

²⁵² τούτου Brandis : ποίου codd., crucem posuit Busse Περιπάτου suspicans : ἀπὸ τούτου Littig : Ρόδιος Düring.

situation, DIETZE-MAGER (2015a: 104) concluded that David only knew Andronicus via Ptolemy and had a superficial knowledge of *VPG* as well. As for **T1.2-3** and Andronicus, the two Neoplatonic biographies mention him together with Ptolemy, and *VL* has the piece of information on the one thousand writings follow (**T2.3**; *VM* has a lacuna in the *codex unicus*). Therefore, the passages will be ultimately based on *VPG* rather than on Andronicus' pinax. We can conclude that *VPG* contained a mentioning of Andronicus and the overall number of writings he listed, thus agreeing with *VPA*'s text.

The remaining sections of part I (§§1.1-5, §1.7) lack Greek testimonies that could help us establish whether they were already present in *VPG*. In spite of this, I would argue that these sections can be considered to render their lost source in a fairly accurate way, as the coherent and logical development of the preface speaks against later intrusions or omissions: §1.1 provides the aetiology of *VPG*; §1.2 explains the strategies adopted to meet the demands of the work's commissioner; §1.3 dwells on the criteria applied when organising the pinax; §1.4 picks up on this by justifying said criteria against the background of similar works; §1.5 underscores the unique character of *VPG* resulting from the criteria applied; §1.6 relativises seeming shortcomings in it; §1.7 concludes the preface by outlining the content of the remainder of the work.²⁵³

Furthermore, several passages in part I could be regarded as superfluous for a Syriac or Arabic audience, for instance the references to Andronicus of Rhodes²⁵⁴ or Ptolemy's remark that he would be ready to meet Gallus in person and explain the issue of Aristotle's books further. The fact that such sentences were not left out in the course of the transmission despite the limited interest they may have aroused points to the fact that part I was not abridged.

Finally, several Greek technical terms typical of prolegomena from the Imperial Era and Late Antiquity appear to have been accurately rendered into Arabic.²⁵⁵ This strengthens the impression that *VPA*'s part I closely adheres to its counterpart in *VPG*.

6.2. PART II

Most testimonies of *VPG* part II drawn from the Neoplatonic *Vitae* can be shown to agree to a certain extent with *VPA*'s text, even though some traces of redaction in the Arabic text will be detected. As (i) most of these textual passages relate information not found elsewhere in Greek or Arabic literature and (ii) the common ancestor of *VM*, *VV*, and *VL* mentions *VPG* as one of its sources (cf. **T1.2-3**), it

²⁵³ The content of part I is further commented upon in ch. 8.1.

²⁵⁴ But see PERKAMS (2019) for an interesting account of Andronicus' editorial activity preserved by al-Fārābī.

²⁵⁵ τάξις or διάθεσις = *tarīb*, σκοπός = *gharaḍ*; also τέχνη = *ṣinā'āt*, σπουδή = *tawakkhkhin*. Cf. ULLMANN (2002-2018) s.v.

seems sensible to trace back the pertinent textual pieces to *VPG* itself rather than to other lost texts. As for *VA*, it does not mention Ptolemy but seven of its nine paragraphs agree with *VPA* not only on the level of content, but also on that of wording. In view of this, *VA* could be considered a direct abridgement of *VPG* to which some material was added (see also above, ch. 5).

As for the two sections of part II not paralleled by Greek testimonies (§§2.3-9, §§2.17-20), there are good reasons to regard the former as derived from *VPG* (ch. 6.2.3) and the latter as partially interpolated within the Arabic transmission (ch. 6.2.9).

6.2.1. §2.1 and T3

VPA §2.1 “Aristotle originated from a city called Stagira, which is in the land called Chalcidice, which is adjacent to the land of Thracia; [Stagira is] close to Olynthus and Methone.”

T3.1 *VM* 1-3 Ἀριστοτέλης ὁ φιλόσοφος πόλεως μὲν ἦν Σταγείρων, τὰ δὲ Στάγειρα πόλις Θράκης πλησίον Ὀλύνθου καὶ Μεθώνης.

T3.2 *VL* 1 *Aristotiles philosophus de gente quidem fuit Macedo, de patria vero Stagiritanus. Stagira autem civitas est Tracie, vicina Olintho et Mothoni.*

T3.3 *VA* 2 Σταγειρίτης μὲν ὁ Ἀριστοτέλης ἀπὸ τῆς ἐν Θράκῃ Χαλκιδικῆς χώρας. ἔστι δὲ αὕτη πλησίον Ὀλύνθου, ἧς καὶ Θουκυδίδης ἐν τῷ πέμπτῳ βίβλῳ μέμνηται, ὅτε τὰς ποιησάσας σπονδὰς καταλέγει πόλεις.

VPA (§2.1) opens its biographical section with the customary discussion of the philosopher's provenance and pedigree. Stagira is said to be part of Chalcidice (which would be adjacent to the land of Thracia) and close to Olynthus and Methone. These two cities having long been destroyed and forgotten about when *VPA* was translated, it is clear that their names must have already stood in *VPG*. Indeed, all mentioned places occur in the same logical order in parallel passages from the Neoplatonic *Vitae*. *VM* and *VV* (**T3.1-2**) closely follows *VPA* except for the missing indication of Chalcidice. This is, however, found in *VA* (**T3.3**), whose wording likewise diverges from the Arabic in minor points: Chalcidice is said to be part of Thracia rather than adjacent to it, and Methone is not mentioned.²⁵⁶ Since no other geographical discussion of Aristotle's provenance is as detailed as *VPA*'s and the Neoplatonic biographies present *VPG* as one of their sources (cf. **T1.2-3**), it seems safe to assume that **T3.1-3** are indeed derived from *VPG*, which would closely reflect what we can read in *VPA*.

The only question mark is represented by the reference to Thucydides in *VA*. Indeed, it may have stood in *VPG* and later been left out by a translator or copyist, as the *History of the Peloponnesian War* never reached these two languages and the reference would have been entirely superfluous for a

²⁵⁶ Notice that, to the best of my knowledge, Methone is never brought up in connection with Aristotle in the Greek tradition and only once in the Arabic, namely by al-Mas'ūdī (*The Book of Notification and Verification*, p. 180), an author who knew and used *VPA* (cf. above, ch. 2.6).

Semitic audience. On the other hand, several Neoplatonists quoted Thucydides as an authority,²⁵⁷ so that the occurrence of his name in VA could be considered an addition by this compiler, who was most likely connected with the Alexandrian Neoplatonic milieu.²⁵⁸

6.2.2. §2.1 and T4

VPA §2.1 “He was the son of Nicomachus. His mother’s name was Hephaestia. Nicomachus was the physician of Amyntas, the father of Philip who was Alexander’s father. [Nicomachus] belonged to the offspring (γένος) of Asclepius, and his lineage [could] be traced back from the offspring of Asclepius to Nicomachus son of Machaon, son of Asclepius. Hephaestia’s origin too [could] be traced back in its lineage to Asclepius.”

T4.1 VM 3-11 υἱὸς δὲ Νικομάχου καὶ Θεστίδος ἀμφοῖν ἀπὸ Μαχάονος τοῦ Ἀσκληπιοῦ καταγομένων, ὡς δηλοῖ τὸ εἰς αὐτὸν ἐπίγραμμα· Θεστίδος ἦν μητὶρ καὶ Νικομάχου γενετῆρος / τῶν Ἀ<σκλ>ηπ<ιαδ>ῶν δῖος Ἀριστοτέλης. [...] ὁ δὲ γε Νικόμαχος ἰατρός ἦν Ἀμύντου τοῦ Μακεδόνων βασιλέως τοῦ Φιλίππου πατρός.

T4.2 VL 1-2 *filius autem fuit Nicomachi et Festie, ambobus a Machaone Asclepiade descenditibus, sicut designat epigramma quod fuit in ipso sic dicens: Festide fuit matre et Nicomacho genitore / qui descenderunt ab Esculapio, insignis Aristotiles. [...] Nicomachus autem medicus fuit Aminti, regis Macedonum, patris Philippi.*

T4.3 VV 1 υἱὸς Νικομάχου, ἰατροῦ Ἀμύντα τοῦ τῶν Μακεδόνων βασιλέως [...] μητὶρ δ’ ἦν Φαιστίδος ἀμφοτέρω δ’ οὗτοι ὁ τε Νικόμαχος καὶ ἡ Φαιστὶς τὸ γένος εἶχον ἀπὸ Ἀσκληπιοῦ. μαρτυρεῖ δὲ τούτοις τὸ εἰς τὸν Ἀριστοτέλην εἰρημένον ἐπίγραμμα τοῦτον ἔχον τὸν τρόπον· Φαιστίδος ἦν μητὶρ καὶ Νικομάχου γενετῆρος / τῶν Ἀσκληπιαδῶν δῖος Ἀριστοτέλης.

T4.4 VA 3 πατὶρ μὲν Νικομάχου, Φερεστιάδος <δὲ> μητὶρ. ἀνάγεται δὲ αὐτοῦ τὸ γένος ἔκ τε πατὶρ καὶ μητὶρ εἰς Ἀσκληπιόν.

In VPA (§2.1) and in the other *Vitae* alike, the indication Aristotle’s origin is immediately followed by some information about his parents. VPA mentions three main points: (i) they were called Nicomachus and Hephaestia; (ii) both parents ultimately descended from Asclepius (that is, they belonged to the celebrated γένος of the Ἀσκληπιάδαι); and (iii) Nicomachus was the personal physician of Amyntas, Philip’s father. Precisely these three pieces of information are found in VM, VV and VL (**T4.1-3**; on Hephaestia/Phaestis’s name and the epigram, see below and fn. 260); both VA (**T4.4**) and VV omit the indication of Nicomachus’ profession (**T4.4**), and VV also has a more simplified version of the pedigree not mentioning Asclepius’ son Machaon. All Neoplatonic texts subsume the discussion of Nicomachus and Phaestis’ γένος under a single sentence, while VPA deals

²⁵⁷ Philoponus, *In De an.* 541.33; Olympiodorus, *In Cat.* 120.11; David, *In Cat.*, 227.5; *In Porph. Is.* 130.9.

²⁵⁸ Cf. above, ch. 3.2.

at length with Nicomachus and then adds only later that Phaestis was of a similar origin. The Arabic expression “his lineage [could] be traced back to” seems to survive in VA’s ἀνάγεται αὐτοῦ τὸ γένος.

Notice, furthermore, that the double Asclepiadean lineage is not referred to in any other ancient sources except VPA and the Neoplatonic *Vitae*.²⁵⁹ Given this, the partial word-for-word agreements, and the fact that the discussion of the pedigree is linked in all *Vitae* with that of Aristotle’s birthplace derived from VPG, we can infer that **T4.1-4** were likewise ultimately taken from VPG and redacted by the Neoplatonists.

A problem is posited by the epigram on Aristotle’s parents found in the three longer *Vitae* (**T4.1-3**) stemming from a common ancestor. Crucially, the double Asclepiadean lineage, which seems to be a distinctive feature of VPG, is mentioned in the epigram. The possibility arises that the *Vitae* ultimately had it from VPG too, and that it was left out by the Syriac or Arabic translator, possibly as he considered it superfluous to embark on rendering two Greek verses that stated nothing new with the respect to what had already been said in the very same paragraph. This would imply that here and in other places, VPA or the Syriac intermediary may have taken the liberty to omit some material felt to be too ‘Greek’.²⁶⁰

6.2.3. §2.2 and T5

VPA §2.2 “Some people said that the entrustment of Aristotle to Plato came about because of an oracle of God Almighty in the temple of Pythion. Others said that it came about because of [the] friendship existing between Proxenus – Aristotle’s paternal grandfather – and Plato.”

T5.1 VM 34-5 ἐτῶν δὲ γενόμενος <ἑπτα>καίδεκα τοῦ Πυθοῦ θεοῦ χρήσαντος αὐτῷ φιλοσοφεῖν Ἀθήνησι φοιτᾷ Σωκράτει [...].

T5.2 VV 3 ἑπτακαίδεκα δ’ ἐτῶν γενόμενος καὶ τῆς Πυθίας κελευούσης αὐτῷ φιλοσοφεῖν στέλλεται ἐν Ἀθήναις, ἔνθα φοιτᾷ Σωκράτει [...].

T5.3 VL 5 *factus autem XVII annorum et Pithia precipiente ipsum philosophari mittitur Athenas, ubi adhesit Socrati* [...].

T5.4 VA 4 φασὶ δὲ ὅτι Πυθοῦ χρήσαντος οὗτος συνέστη Πλάτωνι.

²⁵⁹ Hermippus of Smyrna (F 32 Bollansée) mentions both the names of the parents and the profession of the father, adding that he was also a friend of Amyntas, but makes no mention of a double Asclepiadean lineage.

²⁶⁰ There is, however, a slight possibility that the epigram is an addition by the compiler of the lost common source of VM, VV and VL. The name of Aristotle’s mother in VPA could speak for this possibility: Ἥφαιστία for the correct Φαίστις will hardly be a mistake on the part of an Arabic or Syriac copyist or translator, as it perfectly matches another existing Greek name; hence, Ἥφαιστία must have stood in the Greek exemplar of the Syriac translation. But how could Φαίστις have been corrupted to Ἥφαιστία within the Greek had the epigram been part of VPG? The latter clumsily breaks the metre. Hence, it is possible that the epigram was not part of VPG and VPA’s translators faithfully rendered what was in their template.

In this passage, *VPA* relates the opinion of some biographers who claimed that an oracle was the reason why Aristotle was sent to Plato; others said that he was because of Plato's friendship with Proxenus, who would be Aristotle's grandfather. The former piece of information is found in *VPA* and **T5.1-4**²⁶¹, the latter in *VPA* alone.

Among the Neoplatonic *Vitae*, only *VA* preserves a wording close to *VPA* (**T5.4**); notice the presence of the $\phi\alpha\sigma\iota$ -formula in both sources. *VM*, *VV* and *VL* dropped the $\phi\alpha\sigma\iota$, preferring to mention that Aristotle was first sent to Socrates and, upon his death, to Plato (**T5.1-3**). This, of course, makes no sense from a chronological point of view and cannot have stood in *VPG*, since Ptolemy seems to have had a good knowledge of the Platonic corpus and its internal chronology (cf. below, ch. 8.4). The mention of Socrates should rather be regarded as an intrusion by a Neoplatonist who was eager to harmonise Aristotle and Plato and show that they even studied under the same teacher (cf. ch. 3.1). In conclusion, **T5.4** points to *VPA* being very close to the original Greek.

As for the reference to Aristotle's supposed grandfather Proxenus and his friendship with Plato, this apparently collides both with *VM* 15-16 and *VL* 3, where Proxenus is described as an acquaintance of his father to whom Aristotle was entrusted, and with modern reconstruction (e.g. DÜRING 1957: 263-4) suggesting that he was Aristotle's brother-in-law. The matter requires further investigation. At any rate, *VPA* discusses Aristotle's entrustment to Plato through the mediation of Proxenus as an alternative to the Pythian oracle. Since Proxenus is not mentioned in any other known source except *VPA*, the Neoplatonic *Vitae* and a vague reference in *DL*'s testament (V.179)²⁶², the best solution is to assume that *VPA* preserves an opposition of the two accounts of the entrustment that was already present in *VPG*.

6.2.4. §§2.3-9

§§2.3-9 recount Aristotle's life from a chronological point of view. Even though there are no Neoplatonic testimonia for this section, the account presupposes an excellent knowledge of Greek material on Aristotle's life. In fact, most segments overlap at least partially with pieces of information scattered in the Greek tradition but that apparently never made it into Syriac or Arabic if not through *VPA* itself. So, for instance, §2.3 mentions Aristotle's temporary replacement of Plato as head of the Academy, which is an event for which we have no parallels but is said to have happened *during the latter's second journey to Sicily*; §2.4 discusses Aristotle's stay at the court of Hermias the Slave in Atarneus (cf. the ancient testimonies collected by DÜRING 1957: 272-83); §§2.5-8 recount

²⁶¹ This possibly a new fragment from Hermippus' lost biography of Aristotle (see below, ch. 7).

²⁶² *VPA*'s testament omits the relevant paragraph (cf. below, ch. 6.3).

Eurymedon's accusation of Aristotle, though the supposed ἀσέβεια is said not to have consisted in the paean composed for Hermias (cf. Hermippus F 30 Bollansée)²⁶³ but rather in his lack of observance of the veneration of idols; §2.9, Aristotle's death as an exile, is the logical conclusion of the preceding account.

Of course, there is no way to show that *VPA* perfectly adheres to *VPG* in this long section, but the careful chronological concatenation of the narrated events makes it implausible that some passages reflect later additions. Likewise, the occurrence of major omissions is unlikely, as they would result in chronological gaps in the narration. Modifications of *VPG*'s wording are, however, virtually impossible to detect due to the lack of Greek testimonies.

6.2.5. §2.10, §2.11, **T6** and **T7**

VPA §2.10 "It is clear from what we have mentioned concerning his circumstances that the account of those who allege that he only studied philosophy after having reached thirty years [of age] and that up to that point he had pursued the management of cities (πολιτεία) out of his concern for improving the affairs of the cities is false."

T6 VA 6 ψεῦδος δὲ ἐστίν, ὥς τινὲς φασὶ· τριακοντούτης γενόμενος καὶ τοῦτον εἰς ἰατρικὴν δαπανήσας τὸν χρόνον οὗτος ἦλθεν ἐπὶ φιλοσοφίαν.

§2.11 "For it was Aristotle who laid down the laws of Stagira for its people."

T7 VA 7 τὸ δὲ νομοθέτην αὐτὸν εἶναι τῶν Σταγειριτῶν ἀληθές.

T6 and **T7** directly follow each other in *VA* and are contrasted by the opposition ψεῦδος vs. ἀληθές. Both passages are matched in *VPA*; **T6** even preserves the context in which *VPA* presents the quote, namely a polemical reference to anonymous biographers. It is highly likely that both **T6** and **T7** were taken from *VPG* since the two pieces of information do not appear together in any other known sources.²⁶⁴

There is, however, one major difference between *VPA* and *VA*. According to the former, the anonymous biographers stated that Aristotle had previously engaged with politics (*siyāsat al-mudun*, "governing the cities"), while *VA* rather speaks of medicine (ἰατρική). BAUMSTARK (1900: 35) argued that *VA*'s text is corrupt (ΠΟΛΙΤΙΚΗΝ to ΑΙΤΙΚΗΝ [!] to ΙΑΤΡΙΚΗΝ) but this is entirely *ad hoc*, especially if we consider that Aristotle's interest in medicine is well-attested in other sources.²⁶⁵ The

²⁶³ On this fragment and Ptolemy's relation to Hermippus, see below, ch. 7.

²⁶⁴ The indications of the "thirty years" and the activity of lawgiver appear in *DL* but far apart (V.43, 69-71). *DL* refuted *en passant* the claim by a certain Eumelus that Aristotle only engaged with philosophy at the age of thirty (FGrHist 77 F 1). Contrary to *VA* and *VPA*, Eumelus (or *DL*) does not specify the business of Aristotle up to that point. Hence, *VA* is likely to depend on *VPG* rather than on Eumelus or *DL*.

²⁶⁵ Cf. the *apparatus locorum parallelorum ad VM* §2 Düring and in Ptolemy's pinax, #102 Hein.

matter is ultimately unclear. A (rather speculative) explanation could be that VA's compiler innovated the text to *ιατρικήν* since he was not convinced by the *πολιτικήν* found in *VPG*: as he himself states right after that, Aristotle was the lawgiver of Stagira and must have therefore engaged with politics at a certain point in his life.

6.2.6. §2.11 and T8

VPA §2.11 "It is said that the people of Stagira transferred his body from the place where he died [i.e. Chalcis] to their territory [lit. "to themselves"] and brought him to a place called 'Aristotelic' and held in that place their assembly for deliberating on the most important matters and what worried them."

T8.1 VM 87-90: καὶ ἐν Χαλκίδι τελευτήσαντος μετεπέμψαντο [scil. οἱ Σταγειρίται] τὸ σῶμα καὶ βωμὸν ἐπέστησαν τῷ τάφῳ καὶ Ἀριστοτέλειον τὸν τόπον ἐκάλεσαν καὶ ἐκεῖ τὴν βουλὴν ἤθροιζον.

T8.2 VL 19: *Stagiritani autem detulerunt corpus Aristotilis mortui Chalcide ad Stagiram et altare construxerunt in monumento, locum illum Aristotelium nominantes, et ibi ad consilium congregabantur.*

T8.3 VA 10: μετεπέμψαντο δὲ οἱ Σταγειρίται τὰ ὅσα αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ Χαλκίδος καὶ λάβοντες ἀπέθεντο αὐτὰ ἐν τόπῳ, ὃς Ἀριστοτελικὸς²⁶⁶ ἐκαλεῖτο, ἐν ᾧ καὶ τὴν βουλὴν ἤθροιζον.

§2.11 recounts the story of the repatriation of Aristotle's mortal remains, for which there are parallel passages in VM, VL and VA (**T8.1-3**). Ptolemy introduces the story with his customary "it is said that...", but the anecdote is not hinted at anywhere else in the biographical tradition. The wording of the three testimonies is very similar, though VM and VL have introduced the indication of an altar not found in VPA and VA. The only shared source of VM, VL and VA appears to be VPG and it is therefore clear that they had their discussion of the Ἀριστοτέλειον from there.

Notice that the segment "for deliberating on the most important matters and what worried them" is missing from the testimonies. It may be a gloss added by a Syrian or Arab who thought that his audience may not be acquainted with the concept of Hellenistic βουλή; or alternatively it may have stood in VPG and have been omitted by the Neoplatonic compilers, who found it redundant.

6.2.7. §2.12 and T9

VPA §2.12. "Clear signs of this are the honours [bestowed upon him] by the kings who lived at his time. As for his desire to bring about the good and [his] solicitude and performance of good deeds for the people, this is clear from his letters and writings. He who looks into them can read of his great mediation in the affairs involving the kings of his time and the common people, by which he improved their [i.e. the latter's] matters and repeatedly benefited them."

²⁶⁶ an post **T8.1-2** Ἀριστοτέλειον scribendum?

T9.1 VM 73-94: καὶ οὕτως ἦν τίμιος Φιλίππῳ καὶ Ὀλυμπιάδι ὡς ἀναθεῖναι αὐτῷ μεθ' ἑαυτῶν ἀνδριάντα. ὁ δὲ φιλόσοφος μέγα μέρος ὧν τῆς φιλοσοφίας ὀργάνῳ τῇ δυνάμει πρὸς εὐποιίαν ἐχρήσατο (i) ἓνα τε ἕκαστον εὐργετῶν (ii) καὶ πόλεις ὅλας (iii) καὶ πάντα ἅμα. (i) ὅσα μὲν γὰρ ἕκαστον εὐεργέτησεν αἱ γεγραμμένοι αὐτῷ κατὰ τοὺς βασιλέας περὶ τινῶν ἐπιστ<ολ>αὶ δηλοῦσιν, (ii) ὅσα δὲ πόλεις ὅλας [...], then **T10.1**. (iii) ἵνα δὲ καὶ πάντας ἀνθρώπους εὐεργετήσῃ γράγει τῷ Ἀλεξάνδρῳ βιβλίον περὶ βασιλείας [...].

T9.2 VL 15-17: *et intantum fuit honoratus* a Philippo et Olympiade matre Alexandri quod sibi construxerunt cum eis²⁶⁷ statuem, *et in magna parte fuit consors regni ipsius et multum laboravit pro rege, et cum esset magna pars, philosophie ad benefaciendum potentia usus est, benefaciens* (i) *et singulis proprie* (ii) *et omnibus communiter*. (i) *et quod multis quidem proprie benefecit, declarant misse ab eo epistole et de quibusdam ad regem*. (ii) *quod autem et communiter benefecit multis* [...], then **T10.2**.

A crucial passage in *VPA* that can be exploited to establish its relation to *VPG* concerns the honours bestowed upon Aristotle by unspecified kings (Philip and his wife Olympia in the Greek and Latin) and the letters he supposedly addressed to them; his mediation is supposed to have improved the condition of the common people.

Let us focus on the latter part of the pertaining passage (*VPA* “as for his desire...”). This segment is matched in **T9.1-2** (i), a passage inscribed in a climax of good deeds pertaining to larger and larger groups of people.²⁶⁸ *VPA* essentially relates the same account concerning the letters to the kings, though it explains in further detail what the Greek and Latin subsume under the verb εὐεργέτησεν/*benefecit*. That the proof of Aristotle's εὐεργεσία can be taken from his epistles concerning “the common people” or περὶ τινῶν/*de quibusdam* is common to the Arabic, the Greek and the Latin. All these similarities point in a single direction: that the common source of *VM* and *VL* was drawing on a concept found in *VPG*, and that *VPA* arguably preserves the latter's text in a fairly unchanged wording.

One difference, however, cannot be overlooked. The opening sentence of §2.12 asserts in a general way that Aristotle was held in great esteem by the kings of his time. This passage seems to have its counterpart in the first sentence of **T9.1-2** where, much in contrast with *VPA*, the kings and the honours are named explicitly: Philip and his wife Olympias set up a statue of Aristotle along with their owns. The sentence on Philip and Olympias could well go back to *VPG*, as it belongs together with the passage concerning the epistles from which it was separated by the Neoplatonic intrusion introducing the climax of good deeds. If this was actually the case, what *VPA* is offering would be a simplified version of *VPG*'s account where the mention of Philip, Olympias and the statue was replaced by a more general consideration on Aristotle's relations with people of power.

²⁶⁷ *sic*, referring to Aristotle and Alexander who are mentioned in the preceding sentence.

²⁶⁸ cf. DÜRING (1957: 110). GIGON (1962: 55) characterises this kind of epistles to kings as letters of recommendation.

6.2.8. §§2.13-16 and **T10**

§§2.13-14 Because of the abundance of the favours and good deeds he effected in this domain, the people of Athens proceeded to hold an assembly and agreed to write an inscription they engraved on a stele made of stone and placed on the high citadel in the city, called highest [part of] the city (Ἀκρόπολις). In what they wrote on the stele, they mentioned [the following]: 'Aristotle son of Nicomachus, from the people of Stagira, has earned [this ...] by his taking a stand [for them] before king Philip, through which their [i.e. the Athenians'] situation has improved. [...]'.

T10.1 VM 91-94 πολλὰ δὲ καὶ Ἀθηναίους εὐηργέτησεν ἐν τοῖς κατὰ Φίλιππον γράμμασιν ὥς Ἀθηναίους ἐν τῇ ἀκροπόλει ἀνδριάντα αὐτῷ ἀναθεῖναι.

T10.2 VL 20 *in multis autem et Atheniensibus benefecit, ut declarant tractatus qui sunt ad Philippum, ita quod Athenienses in acropoli* statuem illi construxerunt.

§§2.13-16 recounts the story of the προξενία-decree for Aristotle inscribed on a stele in Athens. The text of the decree is reported in §2.14 and, as DRERUP (1898: 371) first noticed, several Classical Greek epigraphic formulas are still recognisable behind the Arabic text. Hence, it cannot have been forged within the Syriac or Arabic transmission.

The passage was studied in detail by HAAKE (2006: 332-6), who convincingly argued that the decree is a literary forgery by an unspecified Greek source. He also managed to show that the narration of the events occurring after the stele was set up (§§2.15-16) share a common intention with the forged decree, so that the whole passage §§2.13-16 must be regarded as carefully conceived within the Greek tradition (pp. 343-4). Hence, §§2.13-16 must have stood in a Greek source, and the only question is whether the passage was originally part of *VPG* or was interpolated from a different source.

The Neoplatonic *Vitae* help in clarifying the matter, although the text they possibly derived from *VPG* was heavily shortened. **T10.1-2** are part of the climax of good deeds by Aristotle mentioned in the previous sub-chapter; they are adduced as a proof that not only did Aristotle benefit individuals but also whole cities. Aristotle is supposed to have interceded for the Athenians by means of letters to Philip (possibly under the influence of the letters mentioned in **T9.1-2**), which earned him a statue on the Acropolis.

The main difference with respect to the Arabic consists in the mention of a statue rather than a stele carrying the text of a προξενία-decree, but both accounts must ultimately be regarded as ahistorical (HAAKE 2006: 334-5). DÜRING (1957: 110) and GIGON (1962: 58-9) assumed that the passage in the Neoplatonic *Vitae* is ultimately based on the story concerning the decree found in *VPA*, which would have therefore been part of *VPG* from the start, but they did not produce any arguments in favour of this. I reckon their intuition is ultimately correct and *VPA* did not interpolate the passage

from a Greek source different than *VPG*, since (i) **T10.1-2** in the Neoplatonic *Vitae* follow **T9.1-2** just like §§2.13-16 in *VPA* follow §2.12, which points to the *Vitae* having abridged a longer passage of *VPG* while respecting the order of its text; and (ii) the passage in the Arabic only makes sense if it deals with a decree (whose text is indeed reported), so that it is the mention of a statue in **T10.1-2** that should be regarded as an innovation rather than the other way round. The occurrence of the word for “statue” rather than “decree” in the *Vitae* probably came about under the influence of the story concerning the statue of Aristotle set up by Philip and Olympias in **T9.1-2**.

6.2.9. §§2.17-20

The section §§2.17-20 narrates Aristotle's pious acts in Athens after retiring from a politically involved life; it is not paralleled in Greek testimonies. It is introduced by a chronological reference: when Alexander travelled to Asia, Aristotle went back to Athens and set up the Lyceum, “the house of learning that we [i.e. Ptolemy] have mentioned before”.

Now, this chronology of the events seems to contradict the sequence of events narrated in §2.3, where it is stated that Aristotle founded the Lyceum when Plato came back from his second trip to Sicily, that is, long before Aristotle had become Alexander's tutor. The following paragraph (§2.18) is highly problematic too, as it extols Aristotle as a champion of charitable values that may not have existed at the time *VPG* was composed. For instance, the act of “helping to marry the widows off” is not attested in Greek literature (TLG search). Notice that this expression and the following “supporting the orphans” create a beautiful internal rhyme in Arabic (*tazwīj al-ayāmā wa-ghawl al-yatāmā*) with a fairly equilibrate metrical correspondence of the two cola (- - - u - - / u - - u - -). Given that *VPA*'s translator seems not to have bothered too much with questions of Arabic stylistics (see below, ch. 6.5), we must infer that this segment was interpolated by someone else within the Arabic transmission.

The presence of inconsistent chronological information in §2.17 and an Arabic interpolation glorifying Aristotle's piousness in §2.18 also sheds doubts on the authenticity of the remainder of the section §§2.17-20, as a common intention of extolling his good deeds pervades the whole passage. Some textual passages will unmistakably go back to a Greek source text (n.b. not necessarily *VPG*), for instance the indication that Aristotle “[had] the buildings of the city called Stagira restored” (§2.18, *scil.* after the supposed destruction of the city at the hands of Philip, cf. e.g. *VM* 83-85). But it remains impossible to establish what *VPG* read exactly in correspondence with §2.17-20 of the Arabic text.

6.2.10. Conclusions on part II

The analysis of the testimonies of *VPG* part II brings us to the conclusion that in most instances, *VPA* faithfully reflects what stood in *VPG*. Consistencies can be mostly found at the level of content, while word-for-word agreements are rarer though attested. *VA* in particular seems so close to *VPG* that it may be considered a direct epitome thereof with two single additions (§5, §9). The fact that multiple passages in the late antique *Vitae* agree with *VPA* in their content but not entirely in their wording could be the result of (i) *VPA* going through two different stages of translation that may have considerably modified its wording, and (ii) the common source of *VM*, *VV* and *VL* tampering with *VPG*'s text, sometimes with the intention of presenting a biography of Aristotle suiting Neoplatonic conceptions of his character (cf. **T5**).

Nevertheless, some passages seem to point to *VPA* having left out some material present in *VPG*, or alternatively having expanded on it. In the case of **T3.3** (Thucydides), **T4.1-4** (the epigram) and **T8.1-3** (the description of the βουλή), there are some reasons to believe that what we read in *VPA* may not be what stood in *VPG*. As for the story about the statue of Aristotle set up by Philip and Olympias (**T9.1-2**), a comparison with *VPA* makes it quite clear that the latter did simplify the text of its source in this case.²⁶⁹ Thus, one must conclude that the text of part II underwent some changes on its way from Greek to Arabic. This invites to even greater caution when analysing textual pieces in Arabic for which no counterpart in Greek testimonies can be compared: §§2.3-9 are most likely authentic, even though it remains unclear how much they tampered with the wording of their source; §§2.17-20, on the other hand, do look like a major interpolation, possibly partially based on some remarks found in the Greek.

6.3. PART III

Aristotle's testament *apud* DL V.132-188 and *VPA* part III are traditionally regarded as two different recensions of the same text, possibly going back to two different drafts of the original document.²⁷⁰ However, a thorough comparison reveals that many divergences could be accounted for by simply

²⁶⁹ Some passages in the Neoplatonic *Vitae* that display similarities with *VPA* have nonetheless been excluded from our comparison on the account that they may have been taken from sources other than *VPG*. An example is §2.3. That Aristotle studied twenty years under Plato is acknowledged both in *VPA* and all Neoplatonic biographies. Ptolemy's wording, however, seems to have used a single source referring to both the twenty years and Aristotle's supposed replacement of Plato as head of the Academy during his second trip to Sicily: the whole paragraph is introduced by a single "it is said that". Since the Neoplatonic sources are silent on the latter point – which would have suited their intent well –, one can surmise that they had the indication of the twenty years from a different source not mentioning Aristotle's rôle as deputy head of the Academy.

²⁷⁰ Cf. OVERWIEN (2014: 763, 777-9), DÜRING (1957: 61-2).

taking into account that DL was abridging his source. Let us compare the respective opening paragraphs; passages not found in the other version are highlighted in bold, while italics are used for diverging renderings of the same concept and underlining for segments occurring in different order.

VPA §3.2 *I hereby make* Antipater my testamentary executor forever²⁷¹ for everything **that I leave behind**.

Until Nicanor *returns*, Aristomenes, Timarchus, Hipparchus and Dioteles shall take care **of examining what needs to be examined and caring for what should be cared about as to the matter of my family**, Herpyllis – **my servant** –, **my other girl-servants, my male slaves** and what I leave behind. If it is convenient and possible for Theophrastus to step in with them in this [matter], he shall do so.

DL V.132-7 Ἔσται μὲν εἴ· ἐὰν δέ τι συμβαίνει, τάδε διέθετο Ἀριστοτέλης. ἐπίτροπον μὲν εἶναι πάντων καὶ διὰ παντὸς Ἀντίπατρον· ἕως δ' ἂν Νικάνωρ καταλάβῃ, ἐπιμελεῖσθαι Ἀριστομένη, Τίμαρχον, Ἰππάρχον, Διοτέλη, Θεόφραστον ἐὰν βούληται καὶ ἐνδέχῃται αὐτῷ, τῶν τε παιδίων καὶ Ἑρπυλλίδος καὶ τῶν καταλελειμμένων.

Some differences between the two versions could be explained as the result of the Syriac or Arabic translator having taken some liberties, e.g. the shift from the third to the first person in the opening sentence and the suppression of the condition ἐὰν δέ τι συμβαίνει etc. (since it is clear that something did happen).

However, the remaining divergences cannot go back to free renderings on the part of the translators, and the segment highlighted in bold will hardly be additions that came about with the Semitic transmission. DL lacks both here and in V.153 an indication that Herpyllis was Aristotle's servant, while this piece of information is found in Arabic (§3.1 and §3.7). Since Herpyllis' status cannot be inferred from the testament itself and her persona was entirely unknown in the Syriac and Arabic tradition, it follows that the indication "servant" cannot be a Semitic interpolation and must have stood in the Greek. Hence, DL diverged to a certain degree not only from VPA, but also from VPG. Likewise, the segment "of my family" in §3.1 cannot be a free rendering of παιδίων, as the Syriac or Arabic translator cannot have known that Aristotle's wife had already passed away and that his immediate family was reduced to his children Pythias and Nicomachus.

Hence, it appears that VPG and VPA offer a fuller text than DL. Indeed, throughout the text of the testament, the Greek preserves only a few cola missing in its Arabic counterpart, and their absence can often be accounted for.²⁷² Even more interestingly, the segments missing in DL are often such

²⁷¹ This reflects a translation error for διὰ παντός in the Syriac intermediary, see ch. 6.5 below.

²⁷² The only instances where DL has more text are the following: V.138-9 ἐὰν δέ τῃ παιδί συμβῇ τι (ὃ μὴ γένοιτο οὐδὲ ἔσται) vs. §3.3 "should she die" and V.144-5 ἐὰν δέ τι πρότερον συμβαίνει Νικάνωρι (ὃ μὴ γένοιτο) vs. "should Nicanor die", but the omissions in Arabic are analogous to that in §3.1 above; V.152-3 ἐπιμελεῖσθαι δὲ τοὺς ἐπίτροπους καὶ Νικάνωρα μνησθέντας ἐμοῦ καὶ Ἑρπυλλίδος vs. §3.7 "the executors and Nicanor are to take care of Herpyllis for me", where μνησθέντας is missing but the Arabic verb for "to take care" chosen here is *hafiza*, which has the connotation of "to preserve, remember"; V.156-7 ἀργυρίου τάλαντον ἐκ τῶν καταλελειμμένων vs. §3.7 "talent", but it is clear where the money was to be taken from; V.158 παῖδα τὸν Πυρραῖον vs. §3.7 "her slave"; §3.9 V.155-6 σὺν τοῖς ὑπάρχουσιν ἃ

that they may have been perceived as redundant or superfluous²⁷³, and at least one paragraph is hardly intelligible without the additional material found in the Arabic²⁷⁴. This makes it clear that DL was abridging his source, while *VPA* (and *VPG*) strove to reflect it in its entirety.

There is, however, a case where DL preserves a major section not found in the Arabic: the last paragraph of the testament (DL V.177-88), dealing with Aristotle's provision concerning statues of family members. This has been regarded as an omission on the part of the translator(s) of *VPA*, possibly motivated by the fact that the topic did not interest Arabic scholars (cf. DÜRING 1957: 62). One may compare the omission of the epigram on Aristotle's parents that possibly stood in *VPG* (see above, ch. 6.2.2).

In conclusion, our brief analysis of Aristotle's testament could only highlight some problems pertaining to the cross-investigation of its two versions, which are still awaiting an accurate treatment.²⁷⁵ Having established that DL tampered with his source, there is no point in comparing DL and *VPA* on a word-for-word basis hoping that this would highlight anything useful to better assess *VPA*'s faithfulness to *VPG*: it would be often impossible to decide whether divergences go back to a peculiar rendering of *VPG* in *VPA* or to DL's process of redaction. At any rate, the almost entire absence of omissions in the Arabic with respect to DL points to the fact that *VPA* reflects the full extent of its source, the only exception being, possibly, the paragraph on statues found in DL (and *VPG*?) only.

εἰλήφαμεν αὐτοῦ vs. §3.9 “and with him everything he has”; V. 169 τῇ παιδίσκη ἣν ἔχει vs. §3.11 “the slave-girl”. The following case is difficult: V.140-3 εἰδὲ τῇ παιδί συμβῇ τι (ὃ μὴ γένοιτο οὐδὲ ἔσται) πρὸ τοῦ γήμασθαι ἢ ἐπειδὴν γήμηται, μήπω παιδίων ὄντων, Νικάνωρ κύριος ἔστω καὶ περὶ τοῦ παιδίου καὶ περὶ τῶν ἄλλων διοικεῖν ἀξίως καὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἡμῶν. ἐπιμελείσθω δὲ Νικάνωρ καὶ τῆς παιδὸς καὶ τοῦ παιδὸς Νικομάχου vs. §3.3 “should she [scil. Aristotle's daughter] die before marrying, or after that without having children, *the matter shall revert to Nicanor* as to both her matter and that of my son Nicomachus”. I suspect that the missing text in the Arabic is the result of an eye-skip triggered by the double occurrence of Nicanor's name.

²⁷³ e.g. DL avoids mentioning the condition of Nicanor's death at the beginning of §3.5 = V.147, as the condition was already exposed in V. 144-5; it does not state that Ambracis (§3.10 = V.166-7), Tacho, Philo and Olympius (§3.13 = 172-3) are slaves but this is clear from the fact that they must be manumitted; V.152 τοὺς ἐπιτρόπους vs. “the executors *I have mentioned*”.

²⁷⁴ V.166-8 εἶναι δὲ καὶ Ἀμβρακίδα ἐλευθέραν καὶ δοῦναι αὐτῇ, [hic lacunam indicavit Bywaters conlata vers. Ar.] ὅταν ἡ παῖς ἐκδοθῇ, πεντακοσίας δραχμὰς καὶ τὴν παιδίσκην ἣν ἔχει vs. §3.10 “*My servant Ambracis shall be set free. If, after the manumission, she wants to enter the service of my daughter until she gets married, she shall be given 500 drachmas and her female servant.*” Cf. GOTTSCHALK (1972: 316).

²⁷⁵ DÜRING's study of the testament (1957: 238-41) contains a handful of interesting remarks but is based on an ultimately inaccurate translation of IAU (cf. GUTAS 1986: 35 fn. 33; incidentally, Düring did not keep his promise to give the variant readings from IaN made on p. 194). GOTTSCHALK's (1972) otherwise valuable study suffers from relying solely on Düring's translation of the Arabic version and its ascription to Andronicus. OVERWIEN (2014) engaged with the Arabic but was misled in his conclusions by his conscious decision to work exclusively with the outdated Müller edition of IAU.

6.4. PART IV

Ptolemy's catalogue of Aristotelian writings survives in three recensions: the one preserved by the direct transmission and those quoted *in extenso* by IaQ and IAU respectively. Some systematic differences between the three versions have been treated in the introduction to our translation in ch. 4.

As indicated in the translated text, some errors and interpolation may go back to interpolations that occurred within the Greek transmission. The transliteration of the Greek titles found in IaQ (and occasionally in the direct witnesses and IAU) must have been added by someone who had access to *VPG*, as they contain information on lost exoteric works that were entirely unknown in Syriac and Arabic. The Syriac translator is our primary suspect.

It is unclear how many titles were provided with a transliteration in the original version of *VPA*'s pinax. The earliest Arabic testimony of *VPA*, al-Mas'ūdī (cf. above, ch. 2.6), quotes the entry on the *Politeiai* with a Greek transliteration that is missing in all three recensions but then agrees with them in not providing any in the case of the *Physics*, *On the Heavens* and the *Metaphysics*. This may be a hint that *VPA* originally did not contain transliterations for every single title but nevertheless had more than those we find in IaQ. Later, they may have been gradually omitted until only a single one was found in the archetype of the MSS transmission; al-Mas'ūdī and IaQ version would represent intermediate stages of this process.

As DIETZE-MAGER (2015a: 107) noticed, some entries in the catalogue (#12, #27, #57, #59, #60, #82-86, #90, #102) depart from the basic citation pattern in that they provide some information on the pertaining work that could not be derived from the title itself; this is clear especially in the instances where a Greek transliteration of the title can be compared with the Arabic one. She went on to compare such entries with the succinct descriptions of some of Aristotle's works by Ibn al-Ṭayyib (11th c.), which Hein characterised as σκοποί of the works²⁷⁶, and reproached her for having overlooked the structural similarities with the mentioned entries in *VPA* (p. 109). Since Ibn al-Ṭayyib was drawing on a Greek source, it may be the case that such brief *catalogues raisonnés* providing concise information on the works listed already existed in Antiquity and that Ptolemy is an example for this (*ibid.*). Several of the entries in question could not possibly go back to a Syrian or an Arab as the pertaining works had been long lost in Greek (p. 110). Dietze-Mager's conclusion is that *VPG* may have contained many more 'succinct remarks' on Aristotle's books than those surviving in *VPA*, as the Arabic translator may have left out those on well-known works (regarding them as superfluous), while deciding to keep those providing interesting information on lost writings (*ibid.*).

²⁷⁶ On the σκοπός of Aristotle's writings and Ptolemy's position on the issue, cf. below, ch. 8.1.

Hence, Ptolemy would not have entirely maintained his promise not to treat the σκοπός of Aristotle's writings (§1.2), as said textual pieces do resemble other treatments of the σκοπός such as Ibn al-Ṭayyib's (pp. 108-9).

This reconstruction of the features of *VPG*'s pinax is problematic in several respects. First of all, a comparison between the additional remarks on Aristotle's books found in *VPA* and Ibn al-Ṭayyib's σκοποί is not convincing, as the latter does not provide Arabic transliterations of the Greek titles (this is Dietze-Mager's misunderstanding of HEIN's (1985: 276-8) discussion of the issue). Second, the number of actual entries in *VPA*'s pinax containing information not found in the title of the work itself is considerably lower than those indicated by Dietze-Mager.²⁷⁷ Only #90 (*Politeiai*) can be shown beyond doubt to provide a description of the pertaining work which (i) is actually fuller than the respective Greek transliteration and (ii) may have stood in *VPG* already. Incidentally, this entry is found after a section that underwent major interpolations within the Greek transmission (cf. notes on the translation). Based on the *Politeiai* alone, it is difficult to argue that Ptolemy contradicted his assertion not to treat the σκοπός of the writings "out of spite for prolixity" (§1.2) and actually provided brief descriptions of them. The detailed entry may be simply the result of an intrusion, and *VPG* may have ultimately read "*Constitutions of Cities*, 171 sections", as it did in all other cases in the pinax.

²⁷⁷ #12 "His book *On What the Attribute of Justice Pertains To*. It is called περὶ δικαίων": something seems to be missing from the Greek, as the περὶ δικαίων in two books listed by DL is a political work (on this, cf. MORAUX 1951: 96). A possibility would be περὶ <τοῦ πρὸς ὁ τὸ> δίκαιον, an omission partially paralleled in #95 περὶ τ<οῦ πρό>ς τί. #27 "His book *On Animals' Occupation of the Places They Occupy in Order to Find Shelter and Hide in Them*. It is called περὶ τοῦ φωλεῦεν." This is a plain Arabic explanation of the verb φωλεύω which presupposes no deeper knowledge of the content of the lost work (notice the Semitic *figura etymologica*). #59 "His book he labelled *Division of the Conditions that Impose Conditions in Speech and Participates [in It]*": nothing is known of this work and it may well have circulated under a similar, though less clumsy title in Greek. #60 "His book he labelled *On the Refutation of the Opinion that the Premises of the Antithesis Are Taken From the Same Utterance*. It is called ἐπιχειρήματα": there are other titles transliterated as ἐπιχειρήματα in the Arabic (#71, #94) where this single word is summarily used for describing works dealing with contradictions; apparently, the Syriac translator judged it superfluous to transliterate the title beyond the word representing its core. #82-86: the titles #82a-86 have been wrongly taken as representing the individual books contained in #82, but they have nothing in common with it from the point of view of the subject-matter. Furthermore, they alter the alphabetical order of the section. Since #87 describes #82 as immediately preceding it just like in the case of #88-89, it is clear that #82a-86 are an interpolation and do not represent additional information on #82. #102 "And his book in which he gathered *Definitions of Medicine*. It is called ἱατρικῆς": ἱατρικῆς alone does not make any sense and the Arabic cries for the indication of a lacuna containing the word "definition". #57 concerns *Divisions* (διαίρεσεις) in twenty-six books. The brief summary of the content given in Arabic discusses ten different divisions, nine of which are found in the pseudo-Aristotelian *Divisions*, whose surviving epitomes cover a meagre 66 Teubner pages: "He mentions in this book the parts of time [cf. ed. Mutschmann, 45.11], the parts of the soul [15.1], the parts of the impulse [46.2], the matter of the agent, patient and act and the matter of affection [not paralleled], the genera of the good things and what of them is reasonable, what of them in the soul and what of them is away from the soul [48.1 and 1a.9-11, with a similar wording: τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἔστι τὰ μὲν ἐν ψυχῇ, τὰ δὲ ἐν σώματι, τὰ δὲ ἐκτός; the omission of τὰ δὲ ἐν σώματι in the Arabic is possibly an eye-skip]; he mentions the matter of goodness [30.12, 35.10, 60.6] and badness [42.1, 61.16]; he mentions the genera of the sciences [7.11, 51.6], the genera of movements [44.7] and the genera of what speech pertains to [11.1, 37.22], the genera of creatures [63.5] and that [i.e. the criterion] according to which one divides." Now, it is not realistic that Ptolemy selected ten divisions out of the twenty-six books of the original work by Aristotle and in doing so, he matched by chance nine of those also discussed in the epitome. It is much more likely that the remarks on the content of the *Divisions* were added by someone who was working with an abridgement related to the three surviving ones. The interpolator cannot be Ptolemy, as he explicitly states that the work he was discussing covered twenty-six books.

6.5. FEATURES OF THE ARABIC AND SYRIAC TRANSLATIONS

The sample of Arabic text that can be directly compared with the Greek on a word-for-word basis is not sufficient to carry out a full discussion of its translation technique, let alone proposing a stylistically-based identification of the translator (cf. above, ch. 6.1-4). It is nevertheless possible to single out some general tendencies in the *modus vertendi*, although it often remains unclear whether they reflect features of the Syriac or the Arabic translation.

(i) At least one plain translation error is found. At the beginning of Aristotle's testament (§3.1), we find the indication that Antipatrus shall be Aristotle's testamentary executor "forever". Of course, it does not make sense that someone would be appointed to such a position "forever"; we must rather assume that the Syriac translator misunderstood the Greek διὰ παντός found in the parallel passage *apud* DL (V.133). The expression in the testament must mean "in every aspect" or the like, but the Syriac translator took it to be a temporal indication presupposing an ellipsis of χρόνου, which is indeed the common meaning of the expression.²⁷⁸

(ii) An interesting feature of the Arabic (or Syriac) text is the lack of accuracy that made it conflate different Greek words or expression into a single Arabic equivalent (this despite the richness of Arabic lexicon). For instance, the "inscription" on a "stele" in §2.13 is literally a "piece of writing" on a "pillar"; the same word for "piece of writing" (*kitāb*) is used for Aristotle's σύγγραμμα and Ptolemy's and Andronicus' "books" (βιβλίον?) throughout part I, as well as for Aristotle's ἐπιστολή to Antipatrus (§2.5). In the testament, DL says of Aristotle's daughter καὶ ὅταν ὥρα ᾗ τῇ παιδί, and of the young slaves ὅταν δ' ἐν ἡλικίᾳ γένωνται; assuming that *VPG* also differentiated the two expression stylistically, *VPA* levelled them by using *adraka* "to come of age" in both case (with an internal accusative in the latter passage).²⁷⁹

(iii) In two cases, Christian and/or Islamic concepts come to the fore: (i) **T5.1** τοῦ Πυθοῦ θεοῦ χρήσαντος, **T5.2** τῆς Πυθίας κελευούσης, **T5.4** Πυθίου χρήσαντος vs. §2.2 "an oracle by God Almighty in the temple of Pythion"; (ii) the concept of ἀσέβεια in §2.5 is rendered as "not

²⁷⁸ The confusion cannot have taken place during the translation from Syriac into Arabic, as there are no Syriac words for "in every aspect" that could be confused with "forever". For διὰ παντός in the meaning of "forever, always", see LSJ s.v. πᾶς. A further translation error may be found in the testament (but it is also possible that already *VPG* diverged from DL in the passage): DL V.172-5 Τάχωνα δ' ἐλεύθερον εἶναι, ὅταν ἡ παῖς ἐκδοθῇ, καὶ Φίλωνα καὶ Ὀλύμπιον καὶ τὸ παιδίον αὐτοῦ. μὴ πωλεῖν δὲ τῶν παιδῶν μηδένα τῶν ἐμὲ θεραπευόντων vs. §§3.13-14 "when my daughter gets married, my slaves Tacho, Philo and Olympius shall be set free. *Olympius' son* shall not be sold, nor anyone among the male servants in my service". This would point to *VPA* having mistakenly integrated the underlined colon into the following sentence.

²⁷⁹ The Arabic also displays a differentiated rendering of some recurring expressions in the testament (which may be due to the fact that DL was redacting his source), e.g. DL's βούλομαι: §3.2 "it is feasible to him", §3.5 "it is feasible to him and he would like to", §3.7 "she would like to" (twice), "prefers", "select"; and DL's ἐπιμελέομαι: §3.2 "take care" (lit. verb "to be" and participle "taking care" from the root 'N-Y); §3.7 "take care" (H-F-Z, which has the nuance of "to preserve", possibly under the influence of μνησθέντας ἐμοῦ which seems to have been left out in the Arabic if it ever was in its Greek exemplar); §3.9 "take care" 'N-Y.

worshipping the idols that were adored in that time", with an unmistakable temporal and religious distancing.

(iv) Greek ethnonyms are always rendered in a periphrastic way: §1.1 "Andronicus who is from the city of Rhodes", §2.6, §2.13-16 "the people of Athens", §2.11, §2.14 "the people of Stagira". The Greek is sometimes translated in an overly literal way (§3.3 "both her matter and my son's matter" (*wa-ḥt ... wa-ḥt*, lit. "and in her matter and in my son's matter" = *καί ... καί*) and with doublets whose second component is a calque (§2.13 "on the high citadel in the city, called highest [part] of the city" = *Ἀκρόπολις*).

All in all, *VPA* can be described as a translation that often sacrifices stylistic elegance to stick to its source text but not always manages to produce an easily understandable text. The overly intricate literal rendering of the *προξενία*-decree in §2.14 is a blatant example.

The date of the Arabic translation is unclear, as some peculiarities of *VPA* are not compatible with those of the more elegant translations of the circle of Ḥunayn b. Isḥāq, which are those that have been investigated more in detail in scholarship. As HEIN (1985: 407-8) argued, *VPA* may well predate Ḥunayn's activity, since the catalogue gives the title of the *Physics* in its older Syriac-Arabic form that was then replaced by a more Arabic-sounding one in Ḥunayn's own translation of the treatise. As for the origin of the Syriac intermediary, there is so little evidence to work with that it cannot even be established whether the translation is pre-Islamic or not.

7. *VPG*'s sources

Authors and works referenced in part I will be treated in detail in ch. 8. Sources for part II, III and IV respectively will be discussed here in this order.

Part II is full of segments introduced by *φασί*-formulas that point to Ptolemy's engagement with earlier biographies of Aristotle (§2.2 twice, §2.3, §2.10, §2.11). But Ptolemy may have gone through the trouble of scrutinising primary sources too, as the letter by Aristotle to Antipatrus he refers to in §2.5 was probably part of some collections of epistles he apparently knew first-hand (cf. #99, #101). He scrutinised such documents with a critical eye, as exemplified by his rejection of the authenticity of Aristotle's *Apology* supposedly composed in response to the *γραφὴ ἀσεβείας* (§2.8).

Parallel passages to some segments of part II are scattered in Greek literature.²⁸⁰ Reconstructing the pertaining channels of transmission would lie out of the scope of the present thesis; we shall limit ourselves to some remarks on a single work on which Ptolemy seems to have drawn, namely the *Life*

²⁸⁰ E.g. the refutation of the opinion that Aristotle took up philosophy aged thirty (§2.10), cf. DL V.69-71; that he was the lawgiver of the Stagiritans, cf. DL V.43; the process against Aristotle (§2.5-8) and his sojourn at the court of Hermias of Atarneus (§2.4), cf. the texts collected by DÜRING (1957: 272-83).

of Aristotle by Hermippus of Smyrna (fl. second half 3rd c. BC, cf. BOLLANSÉE 1999: 15). The work survives in six fragments only (F 28-33 Bollansée)²⁸¹ but was clearly more extensive than Ptolemy's, if anything because it was composed in multiple books (cf. F 31).

A single fragment by Hermippus closely resembles *VPG*, namely F 32, which preserves Aristotle's pedigree.²⁸² One almost gets the impression that Ptolemy took over Hermippus' text and only added a mention of a double Asclepiadean lineage for the Stagirite. F 28 contains some vague information on Aristotle's disposition for Herpyllis in his testament; they are compatible with the information found in *VPG* and *DL*, and this may be enough to surmise that Hermippus's work also contained at least some extracts of the testament (cf. Bollansée *ad loc.*).

The remaining fragments either contradict Ptolemy's account of Aristotle's life or pertain to matters on which he preferred not to dwell in much detail.²⁸³ Interestingly, F 29 concerns the attribution of the dictum γνῶθι σαυτόν to a eunuch and warden of the Pythian temple. As BOLLANSÉE (1999a *ad loc.*) noticed, Aristotle himself claimed that the saying was originated by the Pythia (Arist. F 28-29 Gigon); also, Peripatetic sources attest the school's interest in the maxim. Hence, Bollansée takes Hermippus' discussion of the dictum's origin to "mak[e] perfect sense within the framework of the monograph on Aristotle".

VPG's text allows to reconstruct an even better context for the Hermippean fragment on γνῶθι σαυτόν. According to §2.2²⁸⁴, some said that Aristotle received an oracle from Apollo Pythion ordering him to take up philosophy. This seems to be paralleled in a further Aristotelian fragment dealing with the dictum (F 709), where Aristotle states that Socrates was prompted by it to take up philosophy. By assuming that Hermippus is behind the anonymous φασι in *VPG*, we could explain more easily why he had the chance to dwell on the origin of the Pythian γνῶθι σαυτόν in F 29: it was

²⁸¹ The assignation of two more (F 73, F 89) is disputed.

²⁸² DL V.4-8 Ἀριστοτέλης Νικόμαχου καὶ Φαιστίδος Σταγειρίτης. ὁ δὲ Νικόμαχος ἦν ἀπὸ Νικομάχου τοῦ Μαχάονος τοῦ Ἀσκληπιοῦ, καθά φησιν Ἑρμιππος ἐν τῷ Περὶ Ἀριστοτέλους· καὶ συνεβίου Ἀμύντα τῷ Μακεδόνων βασιλεῖ ἱατροῦ καὶ φίλου χρεῖα.

²⁸³ F 31, which recounts the last days of Hermias of Atarneus, belongs to the latter kind: this shady character is only referred to *en passant* in *VPG* §2.4, possibly because Aristotle's close ties to the tyrant may have made him appear in a negative light. F 33, on the other hand, narrates the events that led to the foundation of the Lyceum in a manner that is chronologically incompatible with *VPG* (but not entirely with the interpolated second mention of the Lyceum in *VPA* §2.17). For Ptolemy (§2.3), Aristotle relocated to the Lyceum when Plato returned from the second journey to Sicily and resumed his position as head of the Academy, where Aristotle was his deputy. Hermippus, on the other hand, narrates that Xenocrates had been made scholarch of the Academy after Plato's death and when Aristotle found out about this upon his return from a mission at the court of Philip, he founded a new school. Finally, the two accounts of the γραφὴ ἀσεβείας are fundamentally different: Hermippus (F 30) transcribes a paean composed by Aristotle for Hermias and links it with the accusation, while in Ptolemy's text, he was charged with not revering the gods; Ptolemy references a letter by Aristotle himself to strengthen his case (§2.5).

²⁸⁴ cf. ch. 6.2.3 above for projecting the relevant section in *VPA*'s text back to *VPG*.

possibly linked with a discussion of Aristotle's position on the issue and a report on him (and Socrates?) taking up philosophy by command of the Pythia.²⁸⁵

As for part III, it seems that at present, there is no way to safely identify Ptolemy's source. DL's version of the testament is possibly derived from the Peripatetic Aristo of Ceos,²⁸⁶ and our brief analysis of DL's and VPA's testaments (ch. 6.3 above) revealed that the former was abridging his source. It follows that what we read in VPA may turn out to be a fuller version of Aristo's text, but a more thorough textual comparison would be needed before proceeding any further. Only one thing is certain: DÜRING (1957: 61) and OVERWIEN (2014: 778) were too confident in assigning VPG's testament to Andronicus' pinax. Two Neoplatonic biographies assert that both Ptolemy's and Andronicus' works contained a version of the testament (**T1.2-3**) but this reveals nothing as to the supposed dependency of the one onto the other, especially in view of the fact that the information concerning Andronicus may be derived from VPG §1.2 itself, just like in the case of Aristotle's "one thousand writings" (cf. above, ch. 6.1). Indeed, Ptolemy himself may have been aware of different versions of the testament circulating at his time: he describes the text of part III as being quoted "according to how it was reported to us" (§1.7). The matter is best left open for the moment.

As for the source of VPG's pinax, older research claimed that Ptolemy closely followed Andronicus' lost work.²⁸⁷ However, in view of the rediscovery of Ptolemy's preface in MS **B**, this hypothesis had to be abandoned:²⁸⁸ in §1.5, Ptolemy explicitly states his independence with respect to Andronicus, even though this did not prevent him from inserting a cross-reference to the latter's pinax in #100a. The study of Ptolemy's preface and pinax in the following chapter will show that he did adopt an overarching structure typical of the Hellenistic pinakes of Aristotle and possibly of Andronicus' too, but did depart from both on several occasions.²⁸⁹ Also, when establishing the correct order of Aristotle's writings, Ptolemy placed much importance on cross-references present in them (cf. below, ch. 8.1-2). This makes it clear that he was working, at least partially, with primary sources rather than slavishly transcribing previous catalogues. Hence, there may be no source for part IV to be searched in the first place other than Aristotle's own works.

²⁸⁵ This reconstruction is of course conjectural; caution is needed when dealing with such fragmentary sources. For instance, DÜRING (1957: 108) too hastily attributed the story about the oracle to Ptolemy's fantasy. It should be noted that not a single anonymous reference in VPA can be shown to mask a forgery by Ptolemy himself.

²⁸⁶ Aristo is explicitly mentioned by DL as his source for the testament of Strato of Lampsacus (F 16); the other testament of the Peripatetic philosophers in DL are likely to stem from the same source as they are all introduced in similar ways, as opposed to the testaments of Plato and Epicurus (cf. STORK, DORANDI, FORTENBAUGH & VAN OPHUIJSEN 2006 *ad loc.*).

²⁸⁷ cf. on this DIETZE-MAGER (2015a: 95), with literature in fn. 6.

²⁸⁸ DIETZE-MAGER (*ibid.*) lists recent works that nevertheless perpetuate the error.

²⁸⁹ For instance, when listing a version of *Metaphysics* in thirteen books (as opposed to DL and VH), when accepting *De interpretatione* as a genuine work (as opposed to Andronicus), or when listing the *Physics* in eight books rather than five plus three (as opposed to both); cf. below, ch. 8.2.

8. Ptolemy and his epistemological approach to bibliography

8.1. A COMMENTED SUMMARY OF PART I

Ptolemy's preface to Gallus offers much insight into his plan and more in general into the nature of *VPG*. This section has only been studied so far by HEIN (1985: 388-414) and DIETZE-MAGER (2015a). We shall build on their interpretations by recurring to a detailed comparison with other ancient texts and our critical edition and translation of *VPA*, which solves a number of textual problems that directly bore on previous interpretations.

Ptolemy begins his preface (§1.1) by explaining the aetiology of *VPG*'s composition: he was prompted to do so during an everyday conversation with a fellow intellectual (or pupil?) called Gallus, to whom the work is directed. Gallus had informed Ptolemy that he was about to acquire a pinax of Aristotle's writings; Ptolemy therefore showed him the state-of-the-art work on the subject, namely Andronicus' pinax. Since Gallus was not satisfied with it, he made the following request: Ptolemy was to compose a new one, "more succinct and clearer as to its wording". Ptolemy does not doubt the value of Andronicus' books, and the genesis of a new pinax is only justified on the level of its convenience for the use of Gallus. I see no reason to regard the 'concrete' explanation for *VPG*'s genesis as a purely literary device, but it would be counter-intuitive to assume that Ptolemy did not intend his work to be read by a wider audience than his addressee alone.²⁹⁰ Incidentally, it should be noted that the very first paragraph of *VPG* clearly implies that the work's greatest merit lies in the pinax rather than parts II-III, which are only referred to *en passant* in §1.7.

The expression "[a catalogue] more succinct and clearer as to its wording" summarises the essence of *VPG*'s pinax as against Andronicus'. Ptolemy (§1.2) proceeds to explain how he intends to respect Gallus' request for a work of this kind. Fundamentally, he decided to refrain from mentioning the σκοπός of Aristotle's books in the catalogue, a claim that provides indirect evidence for the treatment of this point in Andronicus' work. Explaining the σκοπός of the single writings by Aristotle is a topos of philosophical introductory literature and a key-element in the check-list of the ten aspects to cover in the Neoplatonic prolegomena to his writings; it consisted in a brief outline of the main purpose of the work (cf. HEIN 1985: 254-6). Even though the check-list assumed its standard form with Ammonius Hermiae, the σκοπός of single books was already treated by earlier authors such as Porphyry in the preserved *Commentary on the Categories* (MORAUX 1973: 82). Moraux's analysis of Andronicus' fragments had already brought him to the conclusion that he discussed the respective

²⁹⁰ Ancient epistolography knows numerous examples for "letters sent to a specific addressee that had a potentially broad public" (SCHMIDT 2006). It suffices to think of Plinius the Younger or Seneca Philosophus, who may be contemporary with Ptolemy or predate him by a few decades (see the dating of *VPG* in ch. 8.5 below).

σκοποί in the entries of his pinax, and this assumption is confirmed by evidence drawn from Ptolemy's preface.²⁹¹

Ptolemy (§1.2) justifies the sacrifice of the σκοπός in his pinax on two grounds that are directly related to Gallus' request. On the one hand, this allows him to respect Gallus' instruction to avoid prolixity. On the other, the omission of the σκοπός does not affect the profit Gallus can draw from *VPG*, as he is “the kind of man whose condition is not that of one who knows Aristotle's books in all their distinctions and with a preoccupation for the accuracy (ἀκρίβεια) of what is mentioned in them.” The wording is peculiar indeed and it is not easy to guess what the Greek exactly read. The overall meaning, however, is clear: when it comes to Aristotle's philosophy and science, Gallus is neither a specialist nor a professional. Rather than a φιλόσοφος, he may be a young student or alternatively an ιδιώτης, a learned Roman who does not engage with the subtleties of Aristotelian interpretation and prefers to read his works for intellectual curiosity. Assuming he had started reading Aristotle as part of his παιδεία and wanted to deepen his knowledge of the *corpus Aristotelicum*, it would make perfect sense that he recurred to a learned bibliographer such as Ptolemy to receive orientation as to the content and structure of Aristotle's œuvre.

Indeed, “structure” (τάξις or alternatively διάθεσις, *tartīb*), a key-concept in Ptolemy's preface, appears in §1.3. Despite the difficulty (or rather clumsiness) of the Arabic text, it is clear that the pinax is intended to make Gallus free of having to sort the works in the right order when reading them, and this is just what one expects from a well-organised pinax. Ptolemy comments on this by pointing out that a certain order is already contained in Aristotle's books themselves;²⁹² this has been regarded as an allusion to cross-references in Aristotle's works, mostly placed at the beginning or end of his writings and briefly recalling the content of the books that had to be read in advance or announcing which book will follow the present one.²⁹³ The Aristotelian authorship of these passages is dubious – they may have been added by an earlier editor of the *corpus Aristotelicum* – but Ptolemy apparently took them to be genuine. For in the following sentence, Ptolemy seems to imply that one does not have to take his word on the presence of such references in Aristotle's books, since the interested reader can look up the matter in the primary sources and find confirmation of it.

By taking the (partial) sorting of the books established by Aristotle himself as his point of orientation, Ptolemy legitimises his larger intent of rearranging the *corpus Aristotelicum* by projecting this tendency back onto its author: Ptolemy's aim was to restore their ‘natural’ order. Indeed, the

²⁹¹ See MORAUX (1973: 85) for Andronicus and HEIN (1985: 395-6) for Ptolemy's preface.

²⁹² Arabic grammar makes it plain that “in them” references Aristotle's books rather than *VPG*. This was well discussed by DIETZE-MAGER (2015a: 110-1) with references to previous (mis)translations of the passage.

²⁹³ Cf. DIETZE-MAGER (2015a: 111). The case of the *Meteorology* is a notorious one: at the end of book III, Aristotle announces a fourth book on the subject of stones and metals that is ultimately not delivered, and what is has gone down in the MS transmission as *Metereology IV* dwells on different topics (see e.g. HEIN 1985: 291).

τάξις of Aristotle's book received considerable attention in Greek philosophy. Discussions of the place of single works by Aristotle within the frame of his production had been integrated, along with their σκοπός, into the check-list followed in the Neoplatonic introductions (cf. HEIN 1985: 252). A keen interest in this topic can be detected in the early 2nd c. AD, when Adrastus of Aphrodisias composed a work *On the Order of Aristotle's Books*, of which some fragments survive.²⁹⁴ Alexander of Aphrodisias also engaged at length with the τάξις but it is unclear who are the τινές whose sorting of the books he refers to, whether Adrastus, Andronicus or others (Ptolemy?).²⁹⁵

Ptolemy (§1.4) goes on to link his remarks concerning the intrinsic order of Aristotle's books with the order of the disciplines (τέχναι, *šinā'āt*) treated in them. That the two things go hand in hand has often been overlooked even by "those who possess knowledge and understanding of the books' sequence and order"; neglecting this crucial point can jeopardise any serious attempt to engage with Aristotle's works. Here, it becomes apparent that Ptolemy equated the succession of the titles in a list with the succession of the matters treated and also with the reading order. It is not the case "that each discipline is independent in itself and that they do not follow each other"; a careful order should be worked out in advance so that every subject is treated building on the former.

However, Ptolemy regards it as quite right that in the case of Plato's work, the reading order is not established according to a firm succession of the books' respective subject-matters; there, other principles dictate the correct order (such as the dramatic action; see below, ch. 8.4). Hence, the assumption that the disciplines are independent from each other has been correctly applied (to pinakes of Plato's works?) by numerous members of his school. But an 'epistemological ordering' of Aristotle's books was more firmly established in the books themselves and had to be respected if one was to profit from reading them.

Indeed, Ptolemy's dissatisfaction with the state of affairs concerning the order of Aristotle's books seems to be justified on the basis of what is known about earlier catalogues of his writings. It is reported that the pinakes issued from the library of Alexandria, the most famous of which were those by Callimachus, were sorted alphabetically (FAKAS 2006), a criterion that clearly does not respect Ptolemy's insistence on a logical ordering of the titles. In fact, Callimachus' pinakes may have been used by his pupil Hermippus of Smyrna, a possible source of Ptolemy for part II (cf. above, ch. 7). A further possibility is that Ptolemy has in mind other Hellenistic catalogues of Aristotle's works such

²⁹⁴ MORAUX (1984: 294-5), GOTTASCHALK 1987: (1155-6).

²⁹⁵ DÜRING (1957: 416) stated that Alexander clearly had Andronicus in mind when referencing the order of the *Parva naturalia* and biological writings in *In De sens.* 5.1-19, but frankly, I can see no clear indication of this in the Greek. MORAUX (1973: 84) referenced this passage by Düring to strengthen his claim that "[Andronikos hat] sich selbstverständlich über den Platz der einzelnen Traktate innerhalb der größeren Komplexe, denen sie gehörten, geäußert" (my emphasis). This may be intuitively correct but the passage in *In De sensu* cannot be adduced as positive evidence for Moraux's claim.

as the lost common source of DL and VH.²⁹⁶ There, the works were arranged in broad categories mostly compatible with those established by Ptolemy; within them, however, the individual works had been only tentatively sorted by their subject-matter, possibly in a way that did not reflect Ptolemy's idea of the succession of the disciplines.²⁹⁷

As for Andronicus' pinax, it may well be inferred that Ptolemy was referencing it in §1.4 as *VPG* takes him to be the cataloguer κατ' ἐξοχήν, but it nevertheless seems that Andronicus' criteria for sorting Aristotle's works were partially analogous to Ptolemy's. We know that Andronicus grouped separate works into πραγματεῖαι based on their content (Porphyry, *Vita Plotini* 24) and advocated that one must start reading Aristotle with the logic, as logical thinking is later applied in other matters and the reader must be acquainted with it from the very beginning (Philoponus, *In Cat.* 5.18-23; David, *In Cat.* 117.22-4). Also, he must have placed some emphasis on cross-references in the *corpus Aristotelicum*: it is reported that he considered *De interpretatione* a spurious work as it contains a backwards reference to *De anima* which, in his understating, does not match any passage in it.²⁹⁸

Thus, Andronicus' approach may seem similar indeed to Ptolemy's: it grouped related works together while keeping an eye open for relevant statements in the primary sources and opted for an at least partially progressive order of the disciplines with logic at the beginning. Hence, while Ptolemy's criticism in §1.4 makes him appear as a figure trying to put some much-needed order in the matter, this self-depiction may be not entirely accurate in view of what is known about Andronicus' work. A

²⁹⁶ The possibility has been contemplated that the author of the lost Hellenistic source is the very same Hermippus; the most recent – and aporetic – discussion of the attribution and the possibility of Callimachean reminiscences is DORANDI (2013a: 114-7). Any optimism on the subject had been shattered by BOLLANSÉE (1999: 164-177 *passim*), who challenged not only the assumption that DL's pinax of Aristotle is ultimately Hermippus', but also that Hermippus ever composed one.

²⁹⁷ As DÜRING (1957: 69) puts it: "I can find no philosophy behind this [i.e. DL's] arrangement, no idea that Aristotle's writings should be arranged according to some principle inherent in his philosophy; it is purely matter-of-fact. Any librarian endowed with common sense could have made this list, starting with the more well-known, popular works, proceeding with the bulk of the scholarly works roughly arranged according to their subject-matter, then the so-called hypomnematic works and the collectanea, and finishing the catalogue with the personal documents, letters and poetry."

²⁹⁸ Discussion and references to the primary sources in MORAUX (1973: 117-9). More evidence can be retrieved from a report on the textual history of the *Physics* by Simplicius (*In Phys.* 923.3-925.2): Simplicius states that the old Peripatetic considered book I-V (περὶ φύσεως) and VI-VIII (περὶ κινήσεως) two different works, just as Andronicus did in his pinax. Simplicius also provides documentary evidence (a letter by Theophrastus to Eudemus on textual problems in *Phys.* V) showing that the title of the first part was indeed περὶ φύσεως. He then goes on to list many cross-references by Aristotle clearly distinguishing between περὶ φύσεως and περὶ κινήσεως and points out that a passus in the *Biography of Eudemus* by a certain Damas mentions the two works separately. Indeed, Simplicius observes, the Peripatetics called φυσικά *Phys.* I-VIII, *De cael.*, *De an.* and other works in general, but specifically *Phys.* I-V (here: φυσικὴ ἀκροάσεως). As for the relative order of the books, Simplicius draws attention to the fact that Eudemus' physical work treated the subject-matters of books V-VI in this order; that Andronicus listed both in this order; and that Aristotle built on book V in book VI and claimed in book VII that points treated in book VI had been successfully dealt with before. The question is: to what extent does Simplicius' report rely on Andronicus? MORAUX (1973: 116) thought, quite rightly, that the information on Eudemus and his biography was taken from the work of the Rhodian, as Simplicius could hardly have had direct access to such sources. Moraux was more cautious concerning the list of cross-references by Aristotle, as this could be Simplicius' contribution to the discussion; he nevertheless pointed out that Andronicus' treatment of *De interpretatione* would attest his interest in cross-references by Aristotle, which could speak in favour of the ascription of the list of cross-references to the pinax.

plausible explanation would be that the criteria established by Ptolemy in view of his own sorting of the books were already present in Andronicus' pinax, though just *in nuce* and not methodically applied; Ptolemy went all the way by explicitly linking them with an epistemological discussion and pursuing them in a more systematic manner. After all, the few surviving reports on Andronicus' catalogue show that Ptolemy departed from it in at least two instances (*Physica* and *De interpretatione*, cf. below, ch. 8.2).

After his discussion of the relation between epistemology and bibliography, Ptolemy (§1.5) moves on to highlight once more the unique character of his catalogue. The fact that he has intentionally not recurred to any help from other bibliographers vouches for this: Andronicus' book was not in his mind, as he says. But this is most likely a hyperbolic statement, as #100a contains a precise cross-reference to a passage in Andronicus' pinax.

It is interesting that Ptolemy acknowledges that his own work was not meant to replace that of Andronicus (§1.5; cf. the remarks on §1.1 above), but still feels the need to point out that some shortcomings of *VPG* are only apparent (§1.6): a comparison with Andronicus' work would reveal that Ptolemy listed far fewer works than his 1000²⁹⁹, but this is simply due to the fact that he limited himself to cataloguing Aristotle's books while Andronicus' list encompassed those by Theophrastus too.³⁰⁰ Other differences with respect to Andronicus are the omission of the σκοπός of the single books, on which Ptolemy has already dwelt in §1.2, and the absence of references to the incipits of (some of?) the works and the number of their στίχοι, which were indicated by Andronicus as becomes apparent from #100-100a in Ptolemy's catalogue.³⁰¹

Ptolemy (§1.7) concluded his introduction with a brief outline of the remainder of *VPG*: a biography of Aristotle (part II) and his testament (part III) were included upon Gallus' wish. Again, it is apparent that Ptolemy regarded part II and part III as less important than part IV, in which lie the true merits of his work. A further note concerning part IV is found: Ptolemy did not “explain those books of his [i.e. Aristotle] that have the character of epitomes of other [books]” because of his customary spite for prolixity. Since four epitomes of Platonic dialogues are included in the catalogue, it appears that only abridgements of Aristotle's own works were disregarded.³⁰² The conclusion of

²⁹⁹ The number refers to the sum of the separate books of all works, as DIETZE-MAGER (2015a: 102) pointed out.

³⁰⁰ This sentence has been wrongly interpreted by HEIN (1985: 394) on the account of the faulty text of **B**. DIETZE-MAGER (2015a: 100-1) stuck to **B**'s text and bent Arabic syntax to provide a more satisfactory interpretation, which turns out to be ultimately correct. All problems are solved anyway by **A**, which preserves a superior reading.

³⁰¹ The mention of the στίχοι is only found in an editorial addition proposed by Hein for *VPG* #100a (cf. fn. *ad loc.*).

³⁰² DIETZE-MAGER's (2015a: 112-4) attempted to interpret the ambiguous text of **B** (“I will mention the index of his books without differentiating/clarifying his books which are being found/generated from others because this necessitated excess in discussion and length”, transl. Wakelnig *apud* D.-M) in the following manner: Ptolemy (1) either claims that he did not want to distinguish between attested and lost books, (2) or that he did not list individual books that are part of larger works. Both interpretations turn out to be incorrect on the basis of **A**'s reading: in the expression “those books of his that have the character of *epitomes* of other [books]”, the root W-J-Z in the fourth stem renders σύντομος or a similar concept, as usual in Graeco-Arabic translations (ULLMANN 2002-2018 s.v.). Hence, the reference is surely to

the introduction states that Ptolemy would be happy to meet Gallus and explain the matter further in case he wishes to know more about the epitomes not included in the pinax.

8.2. WHICH WRITINGS DID PTOLEMY ORDER?

As seen above (ch. 8.1), Ptolemy posits that a meta-level of the sorting of Aristotle's books is to be looked for in the proper order of the disciplines (τέχναι) treated in them, and that this order was found *in nuce* in Aristotle's works. The question arises whether Ptolemy's catalogue provides any evidence that he did in fact order the writings according to a criterion of the sort.

The first feature of the catalogue that catches the eye is the fact that Ptolemy seems to be working, at least partially, with the edition of Aristotle's works by Andronicus. From Porphyry's remarks on the latter's editorial activity (see above, ch. 3.4, 8.1), we know that Andronicus gathered related material into single *πραγματεῖαι*. Consequently, Andronicus' hand has been seen behind the replacement of a Hellenistic *Metaphysics* in ten books (as in DL and VH) with the late antique version in thirteen books that included at least one book previously listed as independent (Δ, cf. MORAUX 1973: 61-2). Ptolemy duly followed Andronicus in listing *μεταφυσικῶν* γ'.

Still, Ptolemy did not uncritically accept all of Andronicus' editorial decision. A striking example for this are the *Physics*: Andronicus claimed that books I-V and books VI-VIII belong to two different works, the second of which circulated under the title *περὶ κινήσεως* – which is also how Aristotle refers to them and how they are listed in DL and VH (see above, fn. 298). But Ptolemy's catalogue only lists *φυσικῶν* η'. Ptolemy's deviations from Andronicus may not simply be explained by his somewhat exaggerated statement that Andronicus' pinax was not in his mind (§1.6); they rather reflect conscious decisions. This is confirmed by Ptolemy's treatment of *De interpretatione*: Andronicus is reported to have regarded it as a pseudepigraph (cf. above, ch. 8.1), while Ptolemy lists it as part of the organon (#30).

As for the structure of Ptolemy's pinax, it is organised, broadly speaking, in four major subsections. The first one (#1-28) encompasses the exoteric writings; the first nine have a protreptic character, whereas #10-28 are mostly (or entirely?) dialogues and are arranged in alphabetical order. The second subsection, the esoteric writings, takes up #29-54. After logic (#29-34), we find the succession ethics (#35-36), politics (#37), poetics (#38), and rhetoric (#38a). The theoretical writings (#39-54) are arranged according to the decreasing ontological degree of the matters discussed; first we find *Physica*, *De caelo*, *De generatione et corruptione*, *Meteorologia* (#39-42); then *De anima*

abridgements of Aristotle's books rather than to works lost or not grouped together. An example for an abridgement by Aristotle himself could be the *ἐκλογή ἀνατομῶν* mentioned in DL V.359 and most probably excerpted from the likewise lost *Ἀνατομῶν* in several books (cf. GIGON 1987: 502); the former work is missing in Ptolemy's catalogue.

(#43) and the first part of the *Parva naturalia*, namely *De sensu et sensato* and *De memoria et somno* (#44-45, the latter being an umbrella title for *De memoria*, *De somno*, *De insomniis* and *De divinatione*). The writings on animals and plants follow in an order slightly diverging from the Bekker edition (#46-53), and the section devoted to the theoretical writings is concluded with the *Metaphysics* (#54). The third subsection is devoted to the ὑπομνηματικά (#55-89), which are sorted alphabetically up to #80 (with #82a-86 being later interpolations). A last subsection of heterogeneous origin follows (#90-102): first, we find the 171 πολιτεῖαι (#90) and some miscellaneous writings (#91-97); then, a curious sentence occurs: “and the books that were found in the library of a man called Apellicon”. As DÜRING (1957: 245) indicated, this may well be a heading for the following titles, in which the epistles collected by Artemon are mentioned (#99). There follow the letters and hypomnemata collected by Andronicus (#100-100a) with an explicit cross-reference to his pinax and two miscellaneous titles that may reflect later additions (#101-102).

Now, it is clear that Ptolemy's criterion of the ‘order of the disciplines’ was not applied to the main division into four subsections. The hypomnemata of the third section and the miscellanea of the fourth have by virtue of their mixed nature no higher epistemological position than the theoretical writings of the second. As for subsection number one, it precedes subsection two because of the logical order of exoteric and esoteric writings; the distinction had already been applied in the Hellenistic pinax preserved by DL and VH. Notice, furthermore, that the Hellenistic pinax already displays the structure exoterica-esoterica-hypomnemata-collectanea, so that Ptolemy may hardly be claiming any originality if the innovative character of VPG was supposed to reside in the overarching structure of his catalogue.³⁰³

It is therefore more likely that the ‘order of the disciplines’ was followed *within* one or more subsections. But the hypomnemata are sorted alphabetically for the greatest part, and this is of course no sound epistemological criterion. The same holds true for the first subsection (#1-28): the protreptic writings obviously come first, but why are the dialogues listed alphabetically and not according to their subject-matter? Also, the fourth subsection (#90-102) is fairly chaotic and partially sorts its content based on the respective editors of the texts.

Thus, I would argue that the only place left to look for Ptolemy's own τάξις of the Aristotelian writings are the esoteric writings, and more specifically the theoretical section (#39-54). The first level of division within this section is that of the natural sciences (#39-53) against the *Metaphysics* (#54), which, in contrast with the Neoplatonic scheme that relegates it to a lower position, is treated as the culmination of science. As for the natural sciences, they start with the cosmological writings,

³⁰³ The similarities between Ptolemy's and the Hellenistic pinax were summed up most recently by DIETZE-MAGER (2015: 127); cf. also MORAUX (1951: 306-7).

just like in the Neoplatonic divisions (cf. HEIN 1985: 276), with which they share the order *Phys.*, *Cael.*, *Gen. et corr.*, *Meteor.*, their relative order being explicitly pointed out at the beginning of *Meteor.*³⁰⁴

The second part of this section, however, is sorted in an unparalleled manner. The Neoplatonists opted for an order εἰς ἄνω, beginning with the stones and proceeding to plants, the animals, the *Parva naturalia* and the soul (MORAUX 1951: 185). Ptolemy's sorting is almost diametrically opposed: he begins with *De anima*, then the bulk of the *Parva naturalia*, the animals, the remainder of the *Parva* and *De plantis*.

Arguably, this peculiar sorting was chosen in compliance with an important criterion highlighted by Ptolemy in his introduction, namely the cross-references by Aristotle himself (or one of his early editors) in his works, which were taken as important hints for the correct order of the disciplines, namely for an order κατ' ἄνω rather than εἰς ἄνω. In the following table, explicit references to the reading order in Aristotle's works are compared with their arrangement in Ptolemy's catalogues and the canonical 'Bekker order' based on the best medieval MSS (with the indication of the relative order in Bekker in round brackets). Green highlights a cross-reference respecting Ptolemy's order, red one that does not.³⁰⁵

Title in VPA	= Bekker	Backwards references to	Forward references to
<i>On the Soul</i>	<i>An.</i> (1)		
<i>On Sense Perception and Sensible Things</i>	<i>Sens.</i> (2)	<i>An.</i>	<i>Mem.</i>
<i>On Memory and Sleep</i>	<i>Mem.</i> (3)		
	<i>Somn.</i> (4)		<i>Insomn., Div.</i>
	<i>Insomn.</i> (5)		
	<i>Div.</i> (6)	<i>Somn., Insomn.</i>	<i>Mot. an.</i> ³⁰⁶
<i>On the Movement of Animals</i>	<i>Mot. an.</i> (11)	<i>Part. an., An., Sens., Somn., Mem.</i>	<i>Gen. an.</i>

³⁰⁴ 338a.20-8 περὶ μὲν οὖν τῶν πρώτων αἰτίων τῆς φύσεως (= *Phys.* I-V) καὶ περὶ πάσης κινήσεως φυσικῆς (= *Phys.* VI-VIII), ἔτι δὲ περὶ τῶν κατὰ τὴν ἄνω φορὰν διακεκοσμημένων ἄστρον (= *De cael.* I-II) καὶ περὶ τῶν στοιχείων τῶν σωματικῶν, πόσα τε καὶ ποῖα, καὶ τῆς εἰς ἄλλα μεταβολῆς (= *De cael.* III-IV), καὶ περὶ γενέσεως καὶ φθορᾶς τῆς κοινῆς (= *De gen. et corr.*) εἴρηται πρότερον. λοιπὸν δ' ἐστὶ μέρος τῆς μεθόδου ταύτης ἐπὶ θεωρητέον, ὃ πάντες οἱ πρότεροι μετεωρολογίαν (= *Meteor.*) ἐκάλουν. On this passage, see MANSFELD (1994: 196).

³⁰⁵ For the identification of Ptolemy's titles with transmitted texts, see HEIN 1985 *ad loc.* Cross-references within the writings have been disregarded as it is those at the beginning and end of Aristotle's writings that provide the strongest evidence for their arrangement. References to the passages in the primary sources: *Sens.* 436a1, 449b1-4, *Somn.* 453b17-24, *Div.* 464b16-8, *Mot. an.* 698a1-3, 704b1-4, *Part. an.* 646a8-12, 697b27-30, *Inc. an.* 704b9-10, 714b20-4, *Long.* 467b6-9.

³⁰⁶ The closing sentence of *Div.* (464b18) περὶ δὲ κινήσεως τῆς κοινῆς τῶν ζώων λεκτέον, has been incorrectly bracketed as an interpolation by multiple editors precisely because it does not suit the traditional Bekker order. The Loeb edition does not even list it in the apparatus. See NUSSBAUM (1978: 9).

<i>Anatomy of Animals</i> (lost)			
<i>On the Natures of Animals</i>	<i>Hist. an.</i> (9)		
<i>On the parts of Animals</i>	<i>Part. an.</i> (10)	<i>Hist. an.</i>	<i>Gen. an.</i>
<i>On the Generation of Animals</i>	<i>Gen. an.</i> (13)		
<i>On the Movement of Animals Dwelling on Earth</i>	<i>Inc. an.</i> (12)	<i>Hist. an., Part. an.</i>	<i>An.? Long.?</i> ³⁰⁷
<i>On the Length of the Life of Animals</i>	<i>Long.</i> (7)		<i>Iuv.</i>
<i>On Life and Death</i>	<i>Iuv.</i> (8)		
<i>On Plants</i> (spurious)	<i>Plant.</i> (14)		

The results of the comparison are self-explanatory: any different sorting of the works would imply that more red and less green would be found in the table.³⁰⁸ Notice that every single work has a predefined order in the list, the sole exception being *Plant.*, which is in fact a pseudepigraph included in the *corpus Aristotelicum* to supply the lack of a treatment of botany. As it appears, the κατ' ἄνω sorting of the natural philosophy was contained in Aristotle's works themselves, and Ptolemy was simply striving to respecting it when sorting them.

We can conclude that the restoration of the sorting of the physical writings is one of if not the main original contribution Ptolemy made in his pinax. Other peculiarities of part IV may in fact not go back to Ptolemy himself. For instance, logic takes its natural place at the beginning of the esoteric writings, as it is the ὄργανον of the philosopher; the individual works are sorted in a pre-Neoplatonic manner, without the *Poetic* and the *Rhetoric*. This may hardly be Ptolemy's work as according to Philoponus (*In Cat.* 5.18-23) and David (*In Cat.* 117.22-4), already Andronicus stated that one must start reading Aristotle (possibly meaning: studying the esoteric writings?) with the logical works.

The division of practical philosophy, poetics and theoretical sciences in *VPG* goes back to Aristotle himself who also considered the last sciences to be αἰρετώταται,³⁰⁹ accordingly, the latter occupy the highest position in *VPG*. Again, the succession of the three as found in Ptolemy may be dictated by his epistemological criterion but is not his original contribution, as it is partially found in Aristotle and is attested in the Hellenistic pinax (DL #75-76, #77-89, #90-116 ed. Moraux). Ptolemy could be

³⁰⁷ Most manuscripts read ψυχῆς, which would yield a reference to *De an.* Nevertheless, the *vetustissimus* from the 8th c., MS Oxford, Corpus Christi, 108, has a blank space and the main hand has supplemented ζωῆς in the margin (cf. ed. Bekker). This may well be a reference to *Long.* and/or *Iuv.*, especially since the original title of the latter could be something along the lines of περὶ ζωῆς καὶ θανάτου, as Ptolemy calls it (#52).

³⁰⁸ The only exception would be shifting *Hist. an.* and *Part. an.* in front of *Mot. an.* as to solve the contradiction arising from *Mot. an.*'s reference to *Part. an.*, but this would not be compatible with the fact that *Div.* describes *Mot. an.* as immediately following it.

³⁰⁹ A very influential passage is *Met.* E 1026a 18-23 ὥστε τρεῖς ἂν εἶεν φιλοσοφίαι θεωρητικάι, μαθηματική, φυσική, θεολογική (οὐ γὰρ ἄδηλον ὅτι εἴ ποὺ τὸ θεῖον ὑπάρχει, ἐν τῇ τοιαύτῃ φύσει ὑπάρχει), καὶ τὴν τιμιωτάτην δεῖ περὶ τὸ τιμιώτατον γένος εἶναι. αἱ μὲν οὖν θεωρητικαὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἐπιστημῶν αἰρετώταται, αὕτη δὲ τῶν θεωρητικῶν.

responsible at most for distinguishing between ethical and political writings within the former class and the poetical and the rhetorical ones within the latter; indeed, the end of *Eth. Nic.* announces *Pol.* as the next work, and *Rhet.* is conceived as a continuation of *Poet.*³¹⁰ As for the four physical writings *Phys.*, *Cael.*, *Gen. et corr.*, *Meteor.*, their relative order had already been pointed out in *Meteor.* I (see above). Ptolemy apparently strove to respect it in his pinax, but Andronicus may have done just the same.

8.3. NACHLEBEN OF PTOLEMY'S SORTING

Generally speaking, Ptolemy's disposition of Aristotle's works does not seem to have had much influence. His organon differs slightly from the Neoplatonic one³¹¹, and it is the latter one that was handed down in the manuscripts. The *Rhetoric* and the *Poetic* were transmitted independently from the rest of the *corpus Aristotelicum*, so that it is not possible to establish whether they were ever placed where Ptolemy suggested to place them. The physical writings were treated in Late Antiquity in the order recommended by Ptolemy, but as we have seen, their relative order may theoretically go back to Andronicus or someone else. It is interesting, though, that the *Physics* are transmitted in a single work comprising eight books, as in Ptolemy's list, and not two works of five plus three books as in Andronicus' pinax.³¹²

Nonetheless, vestiges of Ptolemy's order may exist in the case of his placement of *Long.* and *Iuv.* after biology, which departs from the 'Bekker order' grouping them together with the *Parva naturalia*. Indeed, the latter sorting is a very old one, since the Arabic adaptation of the *Parva* (9th c.) includes *Long.* right after *Div.*,³¹³ but Ptolemy's order has been seemingly preserved in a considerable number of Greek MSS: 25% of the witnesses of *Long.* preserve the *Parva naturalia* in the 'Bekker-order', while 50% add *Mot. an.* before it. 13% have *Mot. an.* and further biological works before *Long.*, and 7% have biological works without *Mot. an.*³¹⁴

It would be tempting to trace back the occurrence of *Mot. an.* in this particular position to the influence of Ptolemy, but a considerable number of MSS placing it and other biological works in front of *Long.* were ultimately copied from MSS preserving the 'Bekker order'.³¹⁵ Hence, in many instances, medieval copyists will be responsible for the peculiar position of *Mot. an.*: having noticed

³¹⁰ Cf. *Eth. Nic.* 1181b.21-4 for the order ethics-politics and BURKERT (1975: 71) for the order poetic-rhetoric.

³¹¹ *Cat.*, *Interpr.*, *An. pr.*, *An. post.*, *Top.*, *Soph. Elench.*, *Rhet.*, *Poet.* in Neoplatonism and its Arabic reception (full discussion in HEIN 1985: 329-81) vs. *Cat.*, *Interpr.*, *An. pr.*, *Top.*, *An. post.*, *Soph. Elench.* in VPA #29-34.

³¹² See above, ch. 8.2. A double numbering for books VI-VIII (i.e. both as individual books of the *Physics* and of περὶ κινήσεως γ') survives in the Paris. gr. 1853 (10th c.).

³¹³ On the content of the Arabic version of the *Parva naturalia*, see HANSBERGER (2012: 144).

³¹⁴ I computed the data based on lists of witnesses of the relevant works found in the database PINAKES.

³¹⁵ Cf. the stemma in ISÉPY (2016: 235).

the cross-reference to *Mot. an.* at the end of *Div.*, they decided to alter the order found in their template by inserting this and other biological works before the second part of the *Parva*.

Interestingly, the MSS just described seem to be all located within the α -branch of *Mot. an.*'s transmission. The other main family, β , is represented by the independent Berol. Phillipps 1507 (16th c.!)³¹⁶ and five MSS depending on a lost witness used by William of Moerbeke and dating from c. 1000. Two MSS of the latter subclass agree with the Berol. in sorting the works in the order *Parva* part 1, *Mot. an.*, *Gen. an.*, *Parva* part 2; a further one has *Parva* part 1 and *Mot. an.* only, while the latter two are contaminated with α -MSS and present a different sorting. The existence of an *Überlieferungsgemeinschaft* encompassing not only *Mot. an.* but also *Gen. an.* in between the two parts of the *Parva naturalia* is unmistakable and may ultimately reach back to a late antique witness sorting these works as Ptolemy recommended. Notice, furthermore, that the *vetustissimus biologicus* Oxford, Corpus Christi, CCC 108 (mid 9th c.), includes *Inc. an.*, *Gen. an.* and *Long.* in this order.³¹⁷

We can conclude that the influence of Ptolemy's pinax on the actual organisation of Aristotle's writings was limited but possibly existing. Ironically, Ptolemy regarded his pinax as the true achievement of *VPG* but it was the biographical part of his work that enjoyed a wider resonance, in Late Antiquity (cf. *VM*, *VV*, *VL*, *VA*) as well as in the Arabic world (*IaN*, *MiF*) and the Latin-speaking Middle Ages (Latin translation of *MiF*, *Medieval Vitae*). The sole exceptions to this trend are (i) *IaQ*, who took over his biographical material on Aristotle from *IaN* but judged the pinax alone worth transcribing in full from an actual witness of *VPA*; (ii) *IAU*, who copied the whole of *VPA* save the introduction; and (iii) al-Mas'ūdī (see above, ch. 2.6), who represents an isolated case of an author supplementing information on mentioned Aristotelian works by transcribing the relevant entries from part IV.

8.4. THE ORDER OF PLATO'S BOOKS

This sub-chapter studies in detail Ptolemy's reference to the Platonists and the order of Plato's books in §1.4, which shall be later used to date his activity. Ptolemy states that some people have advocated

³¹⁶ On this MS and its considerable value, see ISÉPY & PRAPA (2018).

³¹⁷ Ptolemy's order also seemingly survives in a handful of copies of *Plant.*, which is placed next to the *Metaphysics* in three out of 18 MSS, even though the two works have nothing in common from a thematical point of view and do not contain cross-references to each other (Paris. gr. suppl. 204 (15th c.), Paris. gr. 1848 (c. 1461), Paris. gr. 1861 (second half 15th c.)). A MS that also preserves two biological writings before *Long.* has *Plant.* follow *Iuv.*, just like in *VPG* (Vat. urb. gr. 39 (15-16th c.)). Now, the Greek version of *Plant.* is a pseudepigraph that is lost in its original form but preserved in a 13th c. translation from Latin (which was in turn based on an Arabic version) (FISHER 2006: 190). It is therefore impossible that the MSS containing *Plant.* and *Metaph.* next to each other preserve the Ptolemaic order as found in some late antique hyparchetype, and the juxtaposition must be accidental. As for the Vat. urb. gr. 39, it is possible that a copyist recognised the descending ontological order of the matters discussed in his template and added *Plant.* as the natural prosecution of the discussion.

that the disciplines do not follow each other (and therefore implied that they could be studied separately). He goes on to remark that this is incorrect with respect to Aristotle's works, where a firm succession of the τέχναι is established, but in the case of the *corpus Platonicum*, the Platonists have applied the criterion of the independent disciplines quite rightly. To fully appreciate Ptolemy's point, we should recall that in his opinion, the disposition of the writings goes hand in hand with the reading order (see above, ch. 8.1-2). We shall now survey antique sortings of Plato's work in order to identify the ones possibly referenced by Ptolemy.³¹⁸

The Alexandrian grammar Aristophanes of Byzantium (c. 265/257-190/180 BC) is reported to have sorted Plato's works in five trilogies while leaving the remaining dialogues καθ' ἑν καὶ ἀτάκτως (DL III.61-62); the main criterion for sorting them this way was their dramatic unity, meaning the order in which the events of different dialogues (or epistles) took place (LUCARINI 2010-2011: 354), and not their subject-matter or the disciplines treated in them. This sorting was not particularly welcomed in Platonic circles, and Platonists writing after Andronicus (that is, Ptolemy's *terminus post quem*) made no reference whatsoever to Aristophanes and usually discussed the order of the *corpus Platonicum* as based on the tetralogical order advocated by Thrasyllus (d. 36 AD). Hence, it does not seem convincing that Ptolemy would reference Aristophanes' order as endorsed by many Platonists.

Indeed, it is more likely that *VPG* implies a reference to the tetralogies by Thrasyllus. The tetralogical order must be slightly older than Thrasyllus himself, who most likely brought it to its full development (DÖRRIE & BALTES 1990: 339); hence, the tetralogies would be roughly contemporary with Andronicus. The most important testimonium on the matter (DL III.56-61) offers much insight into the *modus disponendi* of Thrasyllus and his predecessors. His argument for grouping the *Euthyphro*, the *Apology*, the *Crito* and the *Phaedo* in the first tetralogy is their κοινὴ ὑπόθεσις ("eine gemeinsame Basis der Handlung", DÖRRIE & BALTES 1990: 340), and something analogous to Aristophanes' 'dramatic unity' can be observed in tetralogies II and VIII-IX.

Even more importantly for us, each dialogue in Thrasyllus' list is provided with an adjective pertaining to its philosophical nature: ἠθικός, λογικός, πειραστικός, μαιευτικός, ἀνατρεπτικός, ἐνδεικτικός, πολιτικός, and φυσικός respectively. Throughout the nine tetralogies, dialogues of different nature follow each other in a rather arbitrary way. With Ptolemy's considerations in mind, one may well see here an argument for the independence of the disciplines treated in the dialogues (ethic, logic, natural philosophy...): in the tetralogies, an ethical treatise such as the *Atlanticus* could follow the physical *Timaeus* because the facts narrated in it directly follow Timaeus' speech.

³¹⁸ To avoid confusion, it will be stated here that I refrain from referencing any modern attempt at reconstructing Plato's plan to organise his own works. We are occupied exclusively with reconstructions of it going back to Hellenistic times and the Imperial Era.

From Ptolemy's observations on the hints scattered by Aristotle in his writings and pointing to their correct order, we know that he placed great importance on the intention of the author. Thus, he may have taken the chronological succession of some dialogues as exemplified in the tetralogies to reflect a conscious decision by Plato. The Platonists referred to in *VPG* may be just Thrasyllus and Dercyllides, whom Albinus (*Is.* 4) reports to have sorted the first tetralogy the same way Thrasyllus did.

Later Middle Platonic philosophers proceeded to criticise and revise Thrasyllus' sorting but mostly did so by applying criteria other than the 'correct succession of the disciplines'. Hence, *VPG*'s reference could theoretically reflect both the state of affairs in Early and Late Middle Platonism. In later Middle Platonic discussions, in which the question of the correct order is often linked with that of the dialogue most suitable to start reading Plato (testimonies *ap.* Albinus, *Is.* 4 and DL III.678.83). Some newly proposed solutions may be justified by the convenience of choosing a short and simple dialogue (*Theages*, cf. DÖRRIE-BALTES 1990: 357) or of a summa of Socratic philosophy (*Alcibiades I*) as starting point, others by the will to place Plato's autobiographical material at the beginning of the cycle (*Letters*, cf. *ibid.*, 356). Aristophanes' starting point was the *Republic*, and those who suggested to start with *Clitopho* probably intended it as a prelude to the former (*ibid.* 359). The placement of the *Phaedrus* at the beginning of the cycle (testimony *ap.* Anon., *Prol. in Plat. phil.* 24) is made in compliance with the idea that it was Plato's début work in the philosophical genre and that one has to follow the chronological order of his production.

A further division of the writings is found in a newly edited Middle Platonic work ascribed to Apuleius by its editor (STOVER 2016). In it, the underlying criterion (explicitly addressed in §14) is the one of the persona speaking. Accordingly, the fourteen works discussed are divided into Socratic dialogues, the *Laws* (where Plato was considered to be the main speaker) and a third class of dialogues where Parmenidean and Pythagorean opinions are voiced. The fierce discussion concerning the order of Plato's books reached its pinnacle in Albinus (*Is.* 4-5), who argued that an individual reading order must be worked out for each student individually according to his or her qualities and deficiencies. An almost comical pendant to it are the complaints of the old Taurus (Gellius I.9.8-11), who was much dissatisfied with the freedom granted to the students when it came to select the dialogues to be treated in class.

What most of these Middle Platonic sources have in common is their opposition to Iamblichus' canon of twelve works following each other according to the *absolute* ranks of their subject-matters (Anon. *Prol. in Plat. phil.* 26). For the Neoplatonist advocated that the *Alcibiades I* is the most suitable dialogue to start reading Plato as it contains *in nuce* his most important teachings, but it must be followed by nine ethical, logical, physical and theological works in this strict succession and intended

as a preparation to successfully tackle the two most complicated dialogues of all, namely the *Timaeus* and the *Parmenides*. Iamblichus' approach stands in sharp contradiction with Ptolemy's claim that in the case of Plato's books, the disciplines have rightly been taken not to follow each other logically.

Since the Neoplatonic arrangements of Plato's books were heavily influenced by similar ideas concerning the rank of the disciplines, but Ptolemy still asserts that many Platonists did not apply such criteria, I would argue that his reference would be completely out of place in the 4th c. or later. *VPG*'s reference to the order of Plato's books is best taken to reflect the state of affairs in Middle Platonism (see further below).³¹⁹

Furthermore, Ptolemy points out that many Platonists followed a non-epistemological criterion, possibly implying that not all did so. Indeed, there are two examples for Middle Platonic texts of this kind that, just like *VPA*, survive in Arabic only. The first one is Theon of Smyrna's *On the Order of Plato's Books*, which also encompassed a biography of the philosopher;³²⁰ vestiges of this text are found in IaN (155.8-156.22), IaQ (17.19-18.16) and IAU (4.5.2, transl. Sánchez, mod. ER).

<p>IaN: WHICH BOOKS HE [scil. Plato] WROTE, ACCORDING TO WHAT THEON SAYS, AND HOW HE SORTED THEM. The book <i>On Politics</i> [i.e. the <i>Republic</i>]: Ḥunayn b. Ishāq translated it. The book <i>On Laws</i>: Ḥunayn and Yaḥyā b. 'Adī translated it. Said Theon: Plato made his books [in the form of] dialogues which are conducted with people, and he named each book ["this book"] after the name of the person for which it was composed. They are: [list of Platonic dialogues by Theon, then a different account on the dialogues].</p>	<p>IaQ: Theon mentioned which books Plato composed and sorted. They are the book <i>On Politics</i>: Ḥunayn b. Ishāq translated it. The book <i>On Laws</i>: Ḥunayn and Yaḥyā b. 'Adī translated it [additional remark on the name of the <i>Laws</i> follow, then a list of dialogues by Theon as in IaN].</p>
<p>IAU: Plato's works were linked in groups of fours, which were collectively devoted to a single general σκοπός (<i>gharaḍ</i>) and individually focused on a specific σκοπός of that common theme. He called each one of these classes of books a tetralogy and each tetralogy was also linked with the previous one.</p>	<p>Said Theon: Plato sorted his books for reading, so that he made each class [as consisting] of four books, [and] called this a tetralogy.</p> <p>Said Theon: Plato sorted his books for reading, this being that he made each class [as consisting] of four books, [and] called this a tetralogy.</p>

³¹⁹ Incidentally, this would agree with the absence of any typically Neoplatonic efforts to present Aristotle as Plato's true intellectual heir in part II of *VPG* and the clearly pre-Neoplatonic sorting of the *corpus Aristotelicum* in part IV. DIETZE-MAGER (2015: 141-4) already argued against the hypothesis that Plato was a Neoplatonist based on these two points. The added value of our discussion of the reference to Plato's books is that it shows that not only was Ptolemy not a Neoplatonist, but that he cannot have been active at a time where Neoplatonic ideas were mainstream.

³²⁰ Cf. IaN III.2 154.8-9.

IaN detached the discussion of the *Republic* and the *Laws* from the bulk of Theon's catalogue and placed it at the beginning of the section, as these were the only works that he considered to have been (partially) translated into Arabic. IaQ clearly depends on IaN, as in the case of *VPA*, parts II-III. IAU does not mention his source but based on the partial word-for-word agreement, I would argue that this is none other than Theon and that IAU is offering a fuller text, while IaN abbreviated his source (again, notice the parallel with *VPA*).³²¹

Theon ascribes his own sorting of the dialogues to Plato himself and explicitly states that it reflects the correct reading order to be adopted. The criterion applied is that of the σκοπός of the individual writings and of the tetralogies. It appears that Theon's sorting is of a curious mixed nature, as it preserves the purely Platonic concept of tetralogies developed into its full-fledged form by Thrasyllus but gives it an Aristotelian spin by resorting to the notion of the σκοπός. Since it is explicitly stated that the dialogues were linked to each other by means of their respective σκοποί and had to be read in that way, their relative order is firmly established and contradicts Ptolemy's assertion that the Platonists took the disciplines treated in Plato's works not to follow each other.

The second Middle Platonic text that needs to be discussed is the lost source of al-Fārābī's *On the Philosophy of Plato*, whose *codex unicus* is our MS **B**. The short work is an abridged exposition of the main doctrines contained in Plato's writings and arranged in chapters, each devoted to a single dialogue. It is clear that *On the Philosophy of Plato* is heavily dependent on a Greek source translated into Arabic: it contains much information on Platonic works that had never reached Arabic by another route, and the internal coherence of al-Fārābī's points to a single source (CONNELLY 2016: 186-7). This source was a Middle Platonic one, as exemplified by the literal reading of the *Timaeus*, the dialectical one of *Parmenides* and the importance attached to the political writings.³²² Occasional agreements with passages in Greek philosophical writings point to the fact that al-Fārābī did not tamper much with his source and did not alter the order of the single chapters (*ibid.*, p. 188).

Al-Fārābī's source introduces many entries on the books discussed with the expression "then, after this, he investigated xyz" (cf. ROSENTHAL & WALZER 1943: x-xi). The sequence of the books betrays the existence of a plan dictating their relative order: the succession of the individual topics proceeds from general questions pertaining to the value of logic, rhetoric and dialectic and then introduces

³²¹ Indeed, IAU goes on to present a catalogue of Plato's books based on source preserving Thrasyllus' order. But the source cannot have contained any mention of the σκοπός or of the internal order of the tetralogies based on it since the tetralogies are rather sorted according to other principles. It is therefore clear that IAU's catalogue cannot be his source for the passage translated in the table.

³²² cf. CONNELLY (2016: 183-4), who endorses the arguments of ROSENTHAL & WALZER (1943: xii-xiii) on this point but rightly dismisses their tentative identification of the anonymous source with Theon of Smyrna (p. xiv).

θεωρία as the only method to attain true knowledge. Based on this, the way of life of the philosopher is discussed, and the exposition culminates in the exposition of his political activity.³²³

Therefore, al-Fārābī's source considered a fixed succession of the Platonic writings to be a prerequisite to successfully extract their philosophical meaning. The anonymous author had surely put much effort into establishing a sensible order, as shown by the fact that §§6-11, devoted to the logical sub-disciplines, reverses the order of those treated in the organon (cf. CONNELLY 2016: 184); this cannot be mere coincidence.

Hence, with Theon of Smyrna and the anonymous of al-Fārābī, we have two examples of Middle Platonic works more or less explicitly arguing that a predetermined succession of Plato's works must be worked out according to the criterion of their subject-matter and the ranks of the disciplines treated in them. The parallel with *VPA* is unmistakable. These observations will be instrumental to our dating of Ptolemy in the next sub-chapter.

8.5. PTOLEMY'S DATE

Hard evidence for Ptolemy's dating is provided by his mention of Andronicus of Rhodes (*fl.* after 30 BC, cf. PERKAMS 2019: 460-1) and by the reference to *VPG* *apud* David (**T1.1**, 2nd half 6th c.; cf. KUPREEVA 2018: 258). It is however possible to considerably narrow down this time span. Ptolemy refers to Andronicus' work as canonical, and this cannot have been the case within one or two generations after him at the very least. Therefore, the beginning of the 1st c. AD will do.

As for the *terminus post quem non*, it has been observed that *VPG* is free of any Neoplatonic influence (DIETZE-MAGER 2015: 141-4). Thus, a date much earlier than David must be considered. Our analysis of Ptolemy's catalogues has highlighted several divergences with respect to the Neoplatonic sorting, where Ptolemy seems to preserve older concepts of the works' succession; no polemical reference is made to the Neoplatonic sorting.³²⁴

Now, Porphyry (*Vita Plotini* 24) speaks of Andronicus' order of the Aristotelian writings as fixed. This may be a hint that Ptolemy must have composed *VPG* at a time where the canon had not yet been set and a discussion on the topic was still open. In fact, it seems that the issue was being much debated in the 2nd c.: Adrastus published his *On the Order of Aristotle's Books* in the first half of this century³²⁵ and Alexander of Aphrodisias' references to the τάξις of Aristotle's books are clearly reminiscent of it (see above, ch. 8.1).

³²³ For a more extensive summary of the content of this work, cf. ROSENTHAL & WALZER (1943: x-xii).

³²⁴ In this, we fully agree with DIETZE-MAGER's conclusions (*ibid.*).

³²⁵ On the dating of his activity, see KUPREEVA (2018a: 328-9), MORAUX (1984: 294-5).

Evidence from the Peripatetic side can be complemented with information on the activity of Platonists of that time. We have seen that Ptolemy's reference to the order of the Plato's books only makes sense before Iamblichus established his own reading order; hence, Ptolemy must have been active in the 3rd c. at the latest. The earliest instances for sortings of Plato's books not matching the states of affairs in VPG's time are found in Theon of Smyrna and al-Fārābī's Middle Platonic source. Theon was active after Adrastus, who mentions him, but his treatise *On Mathematical Knowledge Necessary to Read Plato* was published before the *Almagest* (after 146-147 AD), where it is quoted.³²⁶

Thus, external information on the dating of VPG all points in a single direction: the 1st c. or more probably the first half of the 2nd c. AD. The bulk of scholarly works that strove to rearrange the reading order established in the monumental editions of Andronicus and Thrasyllus is all concentrated in this timespan.

8.6. IDENTIFICATIONS OF PTOLEMY

All previous identifications of VPG's Ptolemy with namesakes of his had already been proposed in scholarship by 1889 (cf. above, ch. 5), an isolated exception being PLEZIA (1975). We shall survey each identification in a separate chapter introduced by the relevant text passages on which the identification was underpinned.

8.6.1. Ptolemy Chennus (T11-13)

T11.1 IaN 2.157.4-159.4 [excepts from part II], as *Ptolemy the Unknown* [al-Gharīb] mentioned. [...] Said Ptolemy: [excepts from part II.] Said the Unknown: [part III.]

T11.2 IaN 2.181.10-12 *PTOLEMY THE UNKNOWN*. He was a follower of Aristotle and promulgated his good qualities. Among his books are: a book 'On Information on Aristotle, His Death, and the Order of His Books'.

T12.1 IaQ 42.15-48.8 *Index of Aristotle's books according to what a man called Ptolemy mentioned in his book 'To Aghallus'* [sic]: [part IV.] [Here] ends the enumeration of his books according to what Ptolemy mentioned to Aghallus. To God forever much glory, and a benediction upon his prophet Muḥammad and his house the pure ones. [Quotes from MiF follow.]

T12.2 IaQ 89.17-90.5 *PTOLEMY THE UNKNOWN*. This is a learned man from his time, a philosopher from the land of Rum [i.e. the Roman Empire] in that time. He is not the author of the *Almagest*. He followed Aristotle, loved his [teachings], defended him from his enemies and reported his knowledge to those who learned them from him. He had a reputation and fame in his time because of this. There is a [whole] group of Ptolemies among the kings and learned men, and each one of them was distinguished by a description

³²⁶ See MORAUX (*ibid.*) for the relative dating of Theon and the *Almagest* and JONES (2020: 25) for the date of the *Almagest* itself.

added to his name, so that they can be differentiated by it. This scholar, out of great solicitude for Aristotle, composed a book 'On Information on Aristotle, His Testament and the Order of His Books'.

T13 IAU 4.6 Said Ptolemy in his book 'To Gallus on Aristotle's Life, Information on Him, His Testament and the Catalogue of His Books': [part II, then quotations from other sources.] Said Ptolemy in his book 'To Gallus on Aristotle's Life': [part III, then quotations from other sources.] Famous books by Aristotle from what Ptolemy mentioned: [part IV]. Said Ptolemy: "This is the totality of the books I have seen. Others have seen several other books." I say: [these are] also books by Aristotle, of which I have found many that are not among the books that Ptolemy has seen: [39 titles].

An identification of VPG's Ptolemy with Ptolemy Chennus (the 1st c. AD Alexandrian author of the paradoxographical *καὶνὴ ἱστορία*) was first put forth by CHRIST (1889: 357 fn. 1) and explained more in detail by his student LITTIG (1890: 19 fn. 4). They draw attention to the Arabic epithet with which VPG's Ptolemy is sometimes referred to, namely *al-Gharīb* "the stranger; the unknown" (**T11.1-2**, **T12.2**). The epithet would ultimately go back to a misreading of ΠΤΟΛΕΜΑΙΟΣ ΧΕΝΝΟΣ as ΞΕΝΟΣ on the part of the VPA's translator³²⁷, which consequently translated *al-Gharīb*.

It is important to realise that the epithet is not found in the direct transmission and IAU, where VPA's author is merely called "Ptolemy". IaN is the first one and only one to refer to *al-Gharīb* in a more or less systematic way (**T11.1-2**); IaQ simply speak of 'Ptolemy' when directly quoting from him (**T12.1**) but labels him *al-Gharīb* in the entry devoted to his life and literary production (**T12.2**). The biographical entries on Ptolemy in IaN and IaQ do not provide any information on him that could not be derived from VPA itself if combined with a good deal of fantasy: IaN only says that Ptolemy was an Aristotelian who "promulgated his [i.e. Aristotle's] good qualities", possibly referring to §§2.17-20; IaQ, on the other hand, has a richer text in which the content of IaN's entry is expanded and the interesting remark introduced that the many Πτολεμαῖοι attested in Greek literature are referred to with epithets in order to better distinguish between them.³²⁸

As DÜRING (1957: 210) pointed out, it is probably this idea that urged some Arabic writer to add an epithet to Ptolemy's name, 'the (otherwise) unknown', so that he would not be confused with the author of the *Almagest*.³²⁹ Düring thought that the epithet had been added by the Arabic translator of VPA, but the direct transmission agrees with the quotes *apud* IaQ and IAU in omitting the mention of *al-Gharīb*. It is therefore more plausible that the epithet was created by IaN and that IaQ took over from him the idea to devote a separate entry to Ptolemy's life and works; in this entry only, and not in the direct quotations, he followed IaN's custom of calling Ptolemy "*al-Gharīb*".

³²⁷ Or more correctly: VPG's Syriac translator. The existence of a lost Syriac intermediary had not yet been noticed at the time Christ and Littig were writing.

³²⁸ cf. also Al-Mas'ūdī, *The Book of Notification and Verification*, pp. 112-4, where the kings of the Ptolemaic dynasty are all introduced with an epithet.

³²⁹ Notice that the inaccuracy of an identification with Claudius Ptolemy is immediately pointed out by IaQ in **T.4.2**. But see ch. 8.6.5 below for a reconsideration of this identification.

As seen above (ch. 6.1), it is most likely that *VPG* circulated under the authorship of a mere “Ptolemy” in Greek, and the mystery surrounding his identity had already prompted David (T1.1) to put forth a plainly wrong hypothesis on the matter (Ptolemy Philadelphus). IaN tried to solve the problem by creating the Arabic epithet, and this exclude a translation error χέννος-ζέννος-*gharīb*. Thus falls the only argument for identifying a legitimate epistemologist such as *VPG*'s Ptolemy with a paradoxographer such as Ptolemy Chennus: any identification with a Ptolemy whose philosophical activity is attested in ancient sources clearly emerges as more plausible.³³⁰

8.6.2. Ptolemy the Platonist (T14)

T14.1 Iambl., *De an.* 26 ἄλλη τοίνυν αἵρεσις τῶν Πλατωνικῶν οὐ κατὰ τοὺς δημιουργικοὺς κλήρους, οὐδὲ κατὰ τὰς διαιρέσεις τῶν κρειττόνων γενῶν οἷον θεῶν, ἀγγέλων, δαιμόνων, ἡρώων, οὐδὲ κατὰ τὰς νομὰς τοῦ παντὸς διακρίνει τὰς ἀπὸ τῶν διαφερόντων τόπων καταβάσεις τῶν ψυχῶν· τιθεμένη δὲ τὴν ψυχὴν αἰε εἶναι ἐν σώματι, ὥσπερ ἡ Ἐρατοσθένους καὶ Πτολεμαίου τοῦ Πλατωνικοῦ καὶ ἄλλων, ἀπὸ σωμάτων αὐτὴν λεπτοτέρων εἰς τὰ ὀστρεώδη πάλιν εἰσοικίζει σώματα· διατρίβειν μὲν γὰρ αὐτὴν εἰς μοῖραν τινα τοῦ αἰσθητοῦ, καθήκειν γε μὴν εἰς τὸ στερεὸν σῶμα ἄλλοτε ἀπ' ἄλλων τοῦ παντὸς τόπων.

T14.2 Procl., *In Pl. Tim. comm.* I.20.7-9 Πτολεμαῖος δὲ ὁ Πλατωνικὸς Κλειτοφῶντα αὐτὸν [scil. ὁ δὲ δὴ τέταρτος ἡμῖν [...]] τῶν χθὲς μὲν δαιτυμόνων, *Pl. Tim.* 17a] οἶεται εἶναι· τοῦτον γὰρ ἐν τῷ ὁμωνύμῳ διαλόγῳ μὴδ' ἀποκρίσεως ἠξιώσθαι παρὰ Σωκράτους.

A further possibility often contemplated in scholarship is identifying Ptolemy with a Platonist whose theory of the soul is summarily described by Iamblichus and whom Proclus reports to have argued that the sick and missing interlocutor of the *Timaeus* was Clitopho (T14.1-2). This hypothesis was endorsed by DÜRING (1957: 210-1, 1971: 264), according to whom the mysterious Ptolemy belonged to or was influenced by Iamblichus' school; this because his vicious reconstruction of *VPG*, which had integrated much material from the Neoplatonic *Vitae*, had a distinct Neoplatonic character (see above, ch. 5).³³¹

DIHLE (1957) had already tried to underpin the identification with the Neoplatonist namesake by recurring to passages found in the Arabic tradition: (i) Ptolemy stated *ap. IaN* that Aristotle was the greatest philosopher after Plato, which would automatically make him a Neoplatonist; (ii) he came up with the story concerning the oracle ordering that Aristotle be entrusted to Plato, which “für einen Neoplatoniker eignet sich vortrefflich”; also, (iii) he must have been active in Rome, as IaQ (T12.2)

³³⁰ DIETZE-MAGER (2015: 132-7) discussed the identification with Chennus in detail, also resorting to literature on his καὶνὴ ἱστορία. Having refuted Düring's argument for an Arabic origin of the epithet *al-Gharīb*, she concluded that the identification with Chennus “bleibt eine vertretbare Hypothese” (p. 137). Against the identification, see also DIHLE (1957: 321) with literature.

³³¹ In the 1971 paper, however, DÜRING contradicted himself in stating that Ptolemy may have lived around the middle of the 3rd c., without producing evidence for this dating. Is this simply a slip for “4th c.”?

implies. All three points are invalid: (i) the quote on Plato and Aristotle found in IaN is not explicitly ascribed to Ptolemy, nor is it traceable in *VPA*; (ii) the story concerning the oracle is not a creation by Ptolemy, as the introductory “some said that...” makes clear, and it may be derived from Hermippus of Smyrna (ch. 7); (iii) the inference that Ptolemy was active in Rome relies on a misunderstanding of Steinschneider's Latin translation of IaQ (“philosophus in provincia Rum”, i.e. “in the Roman Empire”).

It would nevertheless be possible to save the identification with Ptolemy the Platonist by simply assuming that he was a Middle Platonist rather than a Neoplatonist, which would agree with our dating of *VPG* in the early 1st-mid 2nd c. Indeed, nothing in the Greek sources speaks against a similar dating of Ptolemy the Platonist, rather there is some (questionable) evidence in favour of an early dating: in **T14.1-2**, Ptolemy's opinions are discussed together with those of the Middle Platonist Dercyllides and of some Aristocles and Eratosthenes who may be identified with philosophers from the Early Imperial period.³³² TOULOUSE (2012: 1739-40) made the case that Ptolemy's identification of the missing interlocutor in the *Timaeus* with Clitophon is based on the internal chronology of the dialogues and makes most sense if Ptolemy is taken to have read them in the order established by Thrasyllus and Dercyllides, wherefore it may not be a coincidence that Proclus mentions Dercyllides right after him.³³³ Furthermore, newly found evidence from *VPG* shows that the discussion of Plato's works in §1.4 could be interpreted as referring to the very same tetralogies (see above, ch. 8.4).

However, at this stage, we are dealing with too many variables and intermediate conclusions to provide a sensible identification. What is more, *VPG*'s Ptolemy seems to refer to the Platonists as an alien sect and clearly sees Plato's philosophical works as of great importance but ultimately inferior to Aristotle's, where a path to truth and science is more clearly laid out (§1.4). An assertion of this kind would be absurd for any Middle Platonist, indeed any Platonist. In conclusion, when it comes to the identification of *VPG*'s Ptolemy with the Platonist mentioned by Proclus and Iamblichus, negative arguments far outweigh positive ones.

8.6.3. Ptolemy the Peripatetic (**T15**)

T15.1 Sext. Emp., *Adv. Math.* I.60-61 διὰ γὰρ τὰ τοιαῦτα εἴρηται ἡ γραμματικὴ ἐμπειρία τῶν παρὰ ποιηταῖς τε καὶ συγγραφεῦσι λεγομένων. Οὗτος [scil. Dionysius Thrax] μὲν οὖν οὕτως· ἐγκαλεῖ δὲ αὐτῷ Πτολεμαῖος ὁ Περιπατητικὸς ὅτι οὐκ ἐχρῆν ἐμπειρίαν εἰρηκέναι τὴν γραμματικὴν (αὐτὴ μὲν γὰρ ἡ ἐμπειρία τριβὴ τίς ἐστι καὶ ἐργάτις ἄτεχνός τε καὶ ἄλογος, ἐν ψιλῇ παρατηρήσει καὶ συγγυμνασίᾳ κειμένη, ἡ δὲ γραμματικὴ τέχνη καθέστηκεν), οὐ συννοῶν ὅτι τάττεται μὲν καὶ ἐπὶ τέχνης τοῦνομα, καθὼς ἐν τοῖς ἐμπειρικοῖς ὑπομνήμασιν ἐδιδάξαμεν, ἀδιαφόρως τοῦ βίου τοὺς αὐτοὺς ἐμπεύρους τε καὶ τεχνίτας καλοῦντος.

³³² On this, see TOULOUSE (2012: 1739-42).

³³³ On the ascription of the order to both Thrasyllus and Dercyllides, see Albinus, *Is.* 4 and above.

T15.2 Cassius Longinus, *Ad Plotinum Ameliumque de fine* ap. Porph., *Vita Plotini* 20 (= F 10 Männlein-Robert) πολλῶν καθ' ἡμᾶς, ὃ Μάρκελλε, γεγενημένων φιλοσόφων οὐχ ἥκιστα παρὰ τοὺς πρώτους τῆς ἡλικίας ἡμῶν χρόνους· ὁ μὲν γὰρ νῦν καιρὸς οὐδ' εἰπεῖν ἔστιν ὅσην σπάνιν ἔσχηκε τοῦ πράγματος· ἔτι δὲ μειρακίων ὄντων ἡμῶν οὐκ ὀλίγοι τῶν ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ λόγων προέστησαν, οὓς ἅπαντας μὲν ὑπῆρξεν ἰδεῖν ἡμῖν διὰ τὴν ἐκ παίδων ἐπὶ πολλοὺς τόπους ἅμα τοῖς γονεῦσιν ἐπιδημίαν, συγγενέσθαι δὲ αὐτῶν τοῖς ἐπιβιώσασιν κατὰ ταῦτ' ὅσοντες καὶ πόλεσιν ἐπιμίζαντας· οἱ μὲν καὶ διὰ γραφῆς ἐπεχείρησαν τὰ δοκοῦντα σφίσι πραγματεύεσθαι καταλιπόντες τοῖς ἐπιγιγνομένοις τῆς παρ' αὐτῶν ὠφελείας μετασχεῖν, οἱ δ' ἀποχρῆναι σφίσι ἡγήσαντο τοὺς συνόντας προβιάζειν εἰς τὴν τῶν ἀρεσκόντων ἑαυτοῖς κατάληψιν. [Commented lists of those who have written among the Platonists, Stoics and Peripatetics. Commented list of those who have not written among the Platonists and Stoics.] περιπατητικῶν Ἀμμώνιος καὶ Πτολεμαῖος φιλολογώτατοι μὲν τῶν καθ' ἑαυτοὺς ἄμφω γενόμενοι καὶ μάλιστα ὁ Ἀμμώνιος· οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ὅστις ἐκεῖνον γέγονεν εἰς πολυμαθίαν παραπλήσιος· οὐ μὴν καὶ γράψαντές γε τεχνικὸν οὐδέν, ἀλλὰ ποιήματα καὶ λόγους ἐπιδεικτικούς, ἅπερ οὖν καὶ σωθῆναι τῶν ἀνδρῶν τούτων οὐχ ἐκόντων οἶμαι· μὴ γὰρ ἂν αὐτοὺς δέξασθαι διὰ τοιούτων βιβλίων ὕστερον γενέσθαι γνωρίμους, ἀφέντας σπουδαιότεροις συγγράμμασι τὴν ἑαυτῶν ἀποθησαυρίσαι διάνοιαν.

A possibility that did not encounter much favour in scholarship³³⁴ is the identification of *VPG*'s Ptolemy with a Peripatetic namesake that Sextus Empiricus reports to have contradicted Dionysius Thrax' definition of grammar as ἐμπειρία rather than as τέχνη (**T15.1**), and/or with a Peripatetic that Cassius Longinus heard teaching in Athens and described as φιλολογώτατος and having left no writings except for ποιήματα καὶ λόγοι ἐπιδεικτικοί transmitted without his permission (**T15.2**). Whether the two can be taken to be the same person or not³³⁵ depends on the date one sets for Sextus; at any rate, Longinus' teacher was not born before 160, since he was still active when Longinus arrived in Athens sometime before 230.³³⁶

Longinus' assertions may seem *prima facie* to contradict the fact that Ptolemy had indeed written something other than poems and declamations, namely *VPG*, but DIETZE-MAGER (2015: 130-1) showed that Longinus is in fact not trying to distinguish between philosophers who did write something and those who did not write at all; the dichotomy is rather between those who fixed their doctrines in systematic writings and those who did not. Hence, it is possible that Longinus' Ptolemy had written a short tract on the order of Aristotle's book which Longinus was not aware of or did not take to qualify as a systematic philosophical work. Indeed, Longinus' description of Ptolemy as φιλολογώτατος would suit the intellectual profile of *VPG*'s author, apparently a voracious reader and systematiser of Aristotle's most diverse works. But notice that the *terminus post quem* for Longinus' Ptolemy is not entirely compatible with our dating of *VPG*'s Ptolemy.

³³⁴ ZELLER (1862: 43-4 fn. 1) proposed it first without any underpinning whatsoever. CHATZIS (1914: ix-xvii) thought that Ptolemy Chennus, Ptolemy the Platonist, Ptolemy the Peripatetic (**T15.1** only) and *VPG*'s Ptolemy are the same person.

³³⁵ The issue is discussed by DIETZE-MAGER (2015: 130).

³³⁶ On the chronology of Longinus' life, see MÄNNLEIN-ROBERT (2001: 26).

As for the Ptolemy mentioned by Sextus Empiricus, he can be dated between Dionysius Thrax and Sextus himself; this timespan includes the period we have indicated for *VPG*'s genesis. Unfortunately, Sextus' report and *VPG* focus on entirely different matters (save the shared reference to the word τέχνη in both texts) and it is not possible to find any clear evidence for an identification of the two Ptolemies beyond their names.

8.6.4. Ptolemy Pinacographus

PLEZIA (1975) identified Ptolemy with an otherwise unattested philosophy teacher from Antioch he labelled "Pinacographus", who would have addressed *VPG* to his pupil Constantius Gallus when this was Eastern Emperor in 351-354. In 1985, PLEZIA developed his thesis by pointing to structural similarities between *VPA* and Donatus' *Life of Virgil* and inferred that Ptolemy may have taught grammar rather than philosophy, though remaining Peripatetic-oriented (p. 11).

A crucial argument in PLEZIA's hypothesis (1975: 39) concerns a supposed reference to the τέλος of Aristotelian philosophy in *VPA*'s preface. Plezia stated that the occurrence of this notion in the late antique prolegomena goes back to Proclus, so that the Ptolemy must be roughly contemporary with him. But these considerations are based on a misunderstanding of the Arabic text: there, the reference is not to the general τέλος (*ghāya*) of Aristotle's philosophy but rather to the σκοπός (*gharaḍ*) of his individual writings. As seen above (ch. 8.1), *VPG*'s preface makes it clear that the σκοποί had already been discussed by Andronicus; hence, any link to Proclus is non-existent.³³⁷ The only argument left for a late dating in the 4th c. is the identification of the addressee with Costantius Gallus, which is patently weak. The informal tone of the preface does not suit by any means a work composed for a 4th c. emperor, however young he may be. Also, the comparison with the *Life of Virgil* is not illuminating, as it pertains to shared feature of the antique biographical genre (DIETZE-MAGER 2015: 139-40).

In sum, of all the identifications discussed in scholarship so far, some are implausible (Chennus, Platonist, Pinacographus), while others (Peripatetic) must remain conjectural due to the lack of positive evidence pointing to a compatibility with the intellectual profile of *VPG*'s author. It should also be taken into account that *VPG*'s Ptolemy may not be identical with any of the namesakes

³³⁷ In a short 1986 paper, PLEZIA addressed the apparent contradiction in the preface of *VPA*, where Ptolemy first asserts that, upon Gallus' request to point him to a pinax of Aristotle, he immediately thought of Andronicus work, only to later assert that he did not have Andronicus' book at hand when he composed *VPG*. Plezia suggests that Ptolemy had read Andronicus before but did not have access to his work at the time he was composing *VPG*, which would solve the apparent contradiction (pp. 384, 386). However, Plezia (i.e. Bielawski) did not translate **B**'s text accurately: Ptolemy did not *think of* Andronicus book, but *showed it* to Gallus, so he must have had a copy at hand when he composed *VPG*. Wakelnig's translation of the passage solves the apparent contradiction: Ptolemy did not have Andronicus' book *in mind*, meaning he refrained from using it, even though he (or the library where he was working) clearly possessed a copy of it.

discussed above, especially in view of the commonness of the name Ptolemy and our limited information on the scholars active in the Imperial Era.

8.6.5. Claudius Ptolemy (T16)

T16.1 Claudius Ptolemaeus, *Synt. math.*, I.1 **πάνυ καλῶς οἱ γνησίως φιλοσοφήσαντες, ὃ Σύρε, δοκοῦσί μοι κεχωρικέναι τὸ θεωρητικὸν τῆς φιλοσοφίας ἀπὸ τοῦ πρακτικοῦ.** καὶ γὰρ εἰ συμβέβηκε καὶ τῷ πρακτικῷ πρότερον αὐτοῦ τούτου θεωρητικῷ τυγχάνειν, οὐδὲν ἦττον ἂν τις εὖροι μεγάλην οὕσαν ἐν αὐτοῖς διαφοράν, οὐ μόνον διὰ τὸ τῶν μὲν ἠθικῶν ἀρετῶν ἐνίας ὑπάρξαι δύνασθαι πολλοῖς καὶ χωρὶς μαθήσεως, τῆς δὲ τῶν ὅλων θεωρίας ἀδύνατον εἶναι τυχεῖν ἄνευ διδασκαλίας, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῷ τὴν πλείστην ὠφέλειαν ἐκεῖ μὲν ἐκ τῆς ἐν αὐτοῖς τοῖς πράγμασι συνεχοῦς ἐνεργείας, ἐνθάδε δ' ἐκ τῆς ἐν τοῖς θεωρήμασι προκοπῆς παραγίγνεσθαι. ἐνθεν ἡγησάμεθα προσήκειν ἑαυτοῖς τὰς μὲν πράξεις ἐν ταῖς αὐτῶν τῶν φαντασιῶν ἐπιβολαῖς ρυθμίζειν, ὅπως μὴδ' ἐν τοῖς τυχοῦσιν ἐπιλανθανώμεθα τῆς πρὸς τὴν καλὴν καὶ εὐτακτον κατάστασιν ἐπισκέψεως, τῇ δὲ σχολῇ χαρίζεσθαι τὸ πλεῖστον εἰς τὴν τῶν θεωρημάτων πολλῶν καὶ καλῶν ὄντων διδασκαλίαν, ἐξαιρέτως δὲ εἰς τὴν τῶν ιδίως καλουμένων μαθηματικῶν. **καὶ γὰρ αὖ καὶ τὸ θεωρητικὸν ὁ Ἀριστοτέλης πάνυ ἐμμελῶς εἰς τρία τὰ πρῶτα γένη διαιρεῖ τό τε φυσικὸν καὶ τὸ μαθηματικὸν καὶ τὸ θεολογικόν.** πάντων γὰρ τῶν ὄντων τὴν ὑπαρξιν ἐχόντων ἐκ τε ὕλης καὶ εἶδους καὶ κινήσεως χωρὶς μὲν ἐκάστου τούτων κατὰ τὸ ὑποκείμενον θεωρεῖσθαι μὴ δυναμένου, νοεῖσθαι δὲ μόνον, καὶ ἄνευ τῶν λοιπῶν, τὸ μὲν τῆς τῶν ὅλων πρώτης κινήσεως πρῶτον αἴτιον, εἰ τις κατὰ τὸ ἀπλοῦν ἐκλαμβάνοι, θεὸν ἀόρατον καὶ ἀκίνητον ἂν ἡγήσαιο καὶ τὸ τούτου ζητητικὸν εἶδος θεολογικὸν ἄνω που περὶ τὰ μετεωρότατα τοῦ κόσμου τῆς τοιαύτης ἐνεργείας νοηθείσης ἂν μόνον καὶ καθάπαξ κεχωρισμένης τῶν αἰσθητῶν οὐσιῶν· τὸ δὲ τῆς ὑλικῆς καὶ αἰεὶ κινουμένης ποιότητος διερευνητικὸν εἶδος περὶ τε τὸ λευκὸν καὶ τὸ θερμὸν καὶ τὸ γλυκὺ καὶ τὸ ἀπαλὸν καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα καταγιγνόμενον φυσικὸν ἂν καλέσειε τῆς τοιαύτης οὐσίας ἐν τοῖς φθαρτοῖς ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ καὶ ὑποκάτω τῆς σεληνιακῆς σφαίρας ἀναστρεφομένης τὸ δὲ τῆς κατὰ τὰ εἶδη καὶ τὰς μεταβατικὰς κινήσεις ποιότητος ἐμφανιστικὸν εἶδος σχήματός τε καὶ ποσότητος καὶ πηλικότητος ἔτι τε τόπου καὶ χρόνου καὶ τῶν ὁμοίων ζητητικὸν ὑπάρχον **ὡς μαθηματικὸν ἂν ἀφορίσειε τῆς τοιαύτης οὐσίας μεταξὺ ὥσπερ ἐκείνων τῶν δύο πιπτούσης** οὐ μόνον τῷ καὶ δι' αἰσθήσεως καὶ χωρὶς αἰσθήσεως δύνασθαι νοεῖσθαι, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῷ πᾶσιν ἀπλῶς τοῖς οὕσι συμβεβηκέναι καὶ θνητοῖς καὶ ἀθανάτοις τοῖς μὲν αἰεὶ μεταβάλλουσι κατὰ τὸ εἶδος τὸ ἀχώριστον συµμεταβαλλομένην, τοῖς δὲ αἰδίοις καὶ τῆς αἰθερώδους φύσεως συντηροῦσαν ἀκίνητον τὸ τοῦ εἶδους ἀμετάβλητον. ἐξ ὧν διανοηθέντες, ὅτι τὰ μὲν ἄλλα δύο γένη τοῦ θεωρητικοῦ μᾶλλον ἂν τις εἰκασίαν ἢ κατάληψιν ἐπιστημονικὴν εἴποι, τὸ μὲν θεολογικὸν διὰ τὸ παντελῶς ἀφανὲς αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀνεπίληπτον, τὸ δὲ φυσικὸν διὰ τὸ τῆς ὕλης ἄστατον καὶ ἄδηλον, ὡς διὰ τοῦτο μὴδέποτε ἂν ἐλπίσαι περὶ αὐτῶν ὁμονοῆσαι τοὺς φιλοσοφοῦντας, μόνον δὲ τὸ μαθηματικόν, εἰ τις ἐξεταστικῶς αὐτῷ προσέρχοιτο, βεβαίαν καὶ ἀμετάπιστον τοῖς μεταχειριζομένοις τὴν εἴδησιν παράσχοι ὡς ἂν τῆς ἀποδείξεως δι' ἀναμφισβητήτων ὁδῶν γιγνομένης, ἀριθμητικῆς τε καὶ γεωμετρίας, προήχθημεν ἐπιμεληθῆναι μάλιστα πάσης μὲν κατὰ δύναμιν τῆς τοιαύτης θεωρίας, ἐξαιρέτως δὲ τῆς περὶ τὰ θεῖα καὶ οὐράνια κατανοουμένης, ὡς μόνης ταύτης περὶ τὴν τῶν αἰεὶ καὶ ὡσαύτως ἐχόντων ἐπίσκεψιν ἀναστρεφομένης διὰ τοῦτό τε δυνατῆς οὕσης καὶ αὐτῆς περὶ μὲν τὴν οἰκειάν κατάληψιν οὔτε ἄδηλον οὔτε ἄτακτον οὕσαν αἰεὶ καὶ ὡσαύτως ἔχειν, ὅπερ ἐστὶν ἴδιον ἐπιστήμης, πρὸς δὲ τὰς ἄλλας οὐχ ἦττον αὐτῶν ἐκείνων συνεργεῖν. τό τε γὰρ θεολογικὸν εἶδος αὕτη μάλιστα' ἂν προοδοποιήσειε μόνη γε δυναμένη καλῶς καταστοχάζεσθαι τῆς ἀκινήτου καὶ χωριστῆς ἐνεργείας ἀπὸ τῆς ἐγγύτητος τῶν περὶ τὰς αἰσθητὰς μὲν καὶ κινούσας τε καὶ κινουμένας, αἰδίους δὲ καὶ ἀπαθεῖς οὐσίας συμβεβηκότων περὶ τε τὰς φορὰς καὶ τὰς τάξεις τῶν κινήσεων· πρὸς τε τὸ φυσικὸν οὐ τὸ τυχόν ἂν συμβάλλοιτο· σχεδὸν γὰρ

τὸ καθόλου τῆς ὕλικῆς οὐσίας ἴδιον ἀπὸ τῆς κατὰ τὴν μεταβατικὴν κίνησιν ἰδιοτροπίας καταφαίνεται, ὥς τὸ μὲν φθαρτὸν αὐτὸ καὶ τὸ ἄφθαρτον ἀπὸ τῆς εὐθείας καὶ τῆς ἐγκυκλίου, τὸ δὲ βαρὺ καὶ τὸ κοῦφον ἢ τὸ παθητικὸν καὶ τὸ ποιητικὸν ἀπὸ τῆς ἐπὶ τὸ μέσον καὶ τῆς ἀπὸ τοῦ μέσον. πρὸς γε μὴν τὴν κατὰ τὰς πράξεις καὶ τὸ ἦθος καλοκαγαθίαν πάντων ἂν αὕτη μάλιστα διορατικοὺς κατασκευάσειεν ἀπὸ τῆς περὶ τὰ θεῖα θεωρουμένης ὁμοιότητος καὶ εὐταξίας καὶ συμμετρίας καὶ ἀτυφίας ἐραστὰς μὲν ποιούσα τοὺς παρακολουθοῦντας τοῦ θείου τούτου κάλλους, ἐνεθίζουσα δὲ καὶ ὥσπερ φυσιοῦσα πρὸς τὴν ὁμοίαν τῆς ψυχῆς κατάστασιν.

T16.2 Claudius Ptolemaeus, *Harm.*, III.6 παραβολὴ τῶν τε τοῦ ἡρμοσμένου γενῶν καὶ τῶν κατὰ τοὺς πρώτας ἀρετάς. καὶ τοίνυν καθ' ἑκατέραν ἀρχήν, τουτέστι τὴν θεωρητικὴν καὶ τὴν πρακτικὴν, τριῶν ὄντων γενῶν, ἐπὶ μὲν τῆς θεωρητικῆς τοῦ τε φυσικοῦ καὶ τοῦ μαθηματικοῦ καὶ τοῦ θεολογικοῦ, ἐπὶ δὲ τῆς πρακτικῆς τοῦ τε ἠθικοῦ καὶ τοῦ οἰκονομικοῦ καὶ τοῦ πολιτικοῦ, τῇ μὲν δυνάμει τούτων μὴ διαφερόντων—κοινὰ γὰρ αἱ τῶν τριῶν γενῶν ἀρεταὶ καὶ ἀλλήλων ἐχόμεναι—μεγέθει δὲ καὶ ἀξία καὶ τῇ περιβολῇ τῆς κατασκευῆς, παραβάλλοιτ' ἂν οἰκείως ἑκατέρω τῶν τριγενῶν τὰ κατὰ τὴν ἀρμονίαν ἐπωνύμως καλούμενα τρία γένη—λέγω δὲ τό τε ἐναρμόνιον καὶ τὸ χρωματικὸν καὶ τὸ διατονικόν [...].

T16.3 Claudius Ptolemaeus, *Apotel.*, I.1 τῶν τὸ δι' ἀστρονομίας προγνωστικὸν τέλος παρασκευαζόντων, ὃ Σύρε, δύο τῶν μεγίστων καὶ κυριωτάτων ὑπαρχόντων, ἐνὸς μὲν τοῦ πρώτου καὶ τάξει καὶ δυνάμει, καθ' ὃ τοὺς γινομένους ἐκάστοτε σχηματισμοὺς τῶν κινήσεων ἡλίου τε καὶ σελήνης καὶ ἀστέρων πρὸς ἀλλήλους τε καὶ τὴν γῆν καταλαμβανόμεθα, δευτέρου δέ, καθ' ὃ διὰ τῆς φυσικῆς τῶν σχηματισμῶν αὐτῶν ἰδιοτροπίας τὰς ἀποτελουμένας μεταβολὰς τῶν ἐμπεριεχομένων ἐπισκεπτόμεθα, τὸ μὲν πρῶτον ἰδίαν ἔχον καὶ δι' ἑαυτὴν αἰρετὴν θεωρίαν, κἂν μὴ τὸ ἐκ τῆς ἐπιζεύξεως τοῦ δευτέρου τέλος συμπεραίνεται, κατ' ἰδίαν σύνταξιν ὥς μάλιστα ἐνῆν ἀποδεικτικῶς σοι περιώδευται [...].

In this sub-chapter, a new identification of *VPG*'s author is proposed, namely one with Claudius Ptolemy. It should be stressed now that its value is conjectural, but it could nevertheless be regarded as a better working hypothesis than any other identification proposed in scholarship. Indeed, it is the only one that produces evidence going beyond the simple chronological compatibility and general philosophical orientation of the characters discussed, as it will be shown that the two figures involved shared a common conception of epistemology.

But first the chronology and the philosophical orientation. The earliest astronomical observation in the *Almagest* (Gr. σύνταξις μαθηματική) Claudius Ptolemy referred to as his own can be dated to 127 AD (FEKE & JONES 2010: 198). His date of birth can therefore be set in the first decade of the 2nd c. at the latest. The *Almagest* itself was published sometime after the *Canobic Inscription* dated to 146-147 AD, as the astronomical data provided in the latter have been revised and improved upon in the former; a more precise date for the *Almagest* may be the mid 150s.³³⁸ The lifespan of Claudius Ptolemy is therefore compatible with that of *VPG*'s author.

³³⁸ The chronological discussion of the works in HÜBNER (2018: 493), 498 must be corrected in view of JONES (2020: 16, 25).

Claudius Ptolemy's works are full of ideas taken from a variety of philosophical sources, mostly Aristotelian and Middle Platonic but also Stoic.³³⁹ He apparently devoted a single monograph to a purely philosophical subject, namely his *On the Criterion and Hegemonic*. This work is a comparatively early one within his production, as is clear from the crude character of the discussion of the topic that most likely pre-date the more refined one in the *Harmonics*; the latter work may in turn pre-date the *Almagest* (JONES 2020: 26). But it should be noted that for Ptolemy, mathematics too equated a kind of philosophical activity (namely the highest), and he clearly regards his works on the subject as products of philosophy (TAUB 1987: 70).

Let us proceed to the epistemology of Claudius Ptolemy. Especially revealing for our scope is the philosophical preface to the *Almagest* (I.1, **T16.1**). Ptolemy deemed the crucial distinction between theoretical and practical philosophy³⁴⁰ worth being endorsed in the very first sentence of his work. He goes on to stress that Aristotle had divided the former kind into the three *πρῶτα γένη* of natural philosophy, mathematics and theology (the key passage is *Met.* E 1026a.18-23, quoted in fn. 309) and endorses and builds on Aristotle's ontological ranking of the three with theology at the top, natural philosophy at the bottom, and mathematics as a middle. The shocking anti-Aristotelian twist of Ptolemy's preface is that it is mathematics that, despite its middle position, deserves to have primacy: this discipline alone leads to *κατάληψις ἐπιστημονική* whereas natural philosophy and theology, if deprived of a mathematical underpinning, do not go beyond *εἰκασία* due to the nature of the objects they investigate. What is more, mathematics is useful for practical philosophy too, as its inherent order and symmetry make people *φιλομαθεῖς* and striving towards divine beauty. In this Platonic-sounding assertion, Ptolemy is picking up on his former remark that practical disciplines are theoretical in themselves even before they are practical.

As for the division of practical philosophy, it is developed by Ptolemy in *Harmonics* III.6 along with the same division of the theoretical disciplines presented in *Alm.* I.1 and *Met.* E: three different musical intervals are equated with the three *γένη* of practical and theoretical virtue respectively. The genera all have relative positions as they stand in a precise relation to each other, and are sorted in the order physical-mathematical-theological on the one hand, and ethical-domestic (*οἰκονομικόν*)-political on the other.

Thus, in the preface to the *Almagest*, Ptolemy is willing to resort to Aristotle's division of science and improve on it to develop his own epistemology. His concern for questions pertaining to the order of the theoretical sciences is apparent and clearly based on assertions found in Aristotle's own

³³⁹ See HÜBNER (2018 *passim*); TAUB (1987) for the Aristotelian and anti-Aristotelian aspects of the philosophical preface to the *Almagest*; FEKE (2012) for Middle Platonic ones.

³⁴⁰ In Plato's works, there are very concrete hints to a division of this kind, e.g. through the opposition between *ἐπιστήμη* and *τέχνη*. It was, however, Aristotle who fully and systematically implemented this distinction in his epistemology.

writings. In the *Harmonics*, the relation between the subgenera of both practical and theoretical sciences are laid out and a clear order established. Interestingly, Ptolemy even dwelt on the ranks of disciplines *within* a sub-genus in the very first sentence of his *Tetrabiblos* (τετρ. σύνταξις or ἀποτελεσματικά, **T16.3**), where he argued that astronomy is *πρῶτος καὶ τάξει καὶ δυνάμει* with respect to astrology, which is *μὴ ὡσαύτως αὐτοτελής*.

Let us now turn to *VPG*. From the preface, we know that *VPG*'s Ptolemy regarded the different practical and theoretical disciplines discussed by Aristotle as following each other and containing in themselves a predetermined order which reflects their ontological rank. Ptolemy put his epistemological theory to work in the catalogue, where he sorted Aristotle's exoteric writings according to firmly established principles. So he divided practical philosophy from theoretical philosophy and had the latter follow the former, while the poetical work had been placed in between them. This probably happened in compliance with Aristotle's remark in the very same chapter of the *Metaphysics* commented upon in the *Almagest* and stating that a third kind of *διάνοια*, a poetical one, exists beside the practical and the theoretical (see above, fn. 309).

As for the subdivisions of the practical writings in the catalogue, the succession of ethics and politics matches the Aristotelian one expounded in *Harmonics* III.6, and the absence of ps.-Aristotle's *οἰκονομικά* in between them may be simply explained by the fact that Ptolemy did not know this work or consciously omitted it as he had recognised his pseudepigraphic character. The absence of the mathematics in the catalogue may likewise be motivated by the fact that Aristotle did not compose a work on the subject; of course, the two remaining disciplines, natural philosophy and theology, follow each other in the order indicated in the *Almagest*, the *Harmonics*, and the *Metaphysics*. Furthermore, notice that the Stoic and Platonic division of philosophy granting logic or dialectic a status similar to that of practical and theoretical philosophy (cf. HADOT 1979: 206-7) is rejected both by Claudius Ptolemy and *VPG*'s author: in the former case, philosophy was only divided into practical and theoretical, while in the latter, logic was relegated to an *organon*-status at the beginning of the exoteric works and the Aristotelian tripartition of practical, poetical and theoretical disciplines adopted. As for the sub-divisions of a single theoretical discipline in *VPG*, as in the case of the natural philosophy, this seems to be paralleled by Claudius Ptolemy's discussion of the relative order of the branches of mathematics in the *Tetrabiblos*.

A further point of commonality between the *Almagest* and *VPG* lies in the isagogical elements they focus on. Those present in the preface to the *Almagest* have been well highlighted by MANSFELD (1998: 66-71): Ptolemy inscribes himself in a long-standing tradition of didascalical mathematical writings by laying out his *πρόθεσις* and the *σκοπός* of his work, discussing the epistemological position of mathematics as well as its utility, and referencing the order of study by stating that some

previous knowledge of the subject is a prerequisite for successfully dealing with the *Almagest*. A sensible order of the study was arranged within the *Almagest* itself, so that the student can be best guided through a progressive understanding of astronomy.

Here, we can observe a preoccupation with some key isagogical problems similar to those laid out in *VPG*. Apparently, the notion of σκοπός was known to both authors, who also shared the belief that the reading of theoretical works must be arranged in a way that the difficulty of their subjects progressively increases.

David's testimony (T1.1) referring to a Ptolemy Philadelphus as *VPG*'s author does not invalidate our hypothesis. If anything, it strengthens it. Evidence drawn from the Arabic shows that *VPA* and most likely *VPG* were circulating under the name of a mere "Ptolemy", which also explains why David was in the position to guess who the mysterious author was. If *VPG* was indeed the work of Claudius Ptolemy, the absence of any later reference to him in relation with *VPG* can only be explained by assuming that the authorship became unclear very quickly due to the lack of his full name in the title. That the Arabs literally called *VPG*'s author "not the *Almagest*'s Ptolemy", is not surprising in view of their ignorance of the subtleties of 2nd c. debates on epistemology.

To sum up, there are two main arguments for identifying *VPG*'s Ptolemy with Claudius Ptolemy: (i) the striking similarities between the Aristotelian division of philosophy adopted in the *Almagest*, the *Harmonics*, the *Tetrabiblos* and *VPG*; (ii) these works' attention for the succession of the disciplines and the remarks concerning their natural relations to each other; this attention is best exemplified by the isagogical elements hinted at in the *Almagest* and *VPG*.

However, this may not be enough to point to a shared authorship of these works. By the time Claudius Ptolemy and *VPG*'s author were writing, such issues were being heavily discussed and had even penetrated Middle Platonic circles, as testified by Albinus' purely Aristotelian division of practical philosophy into ethics, economics and politics and his remark that they constitute a prelude to θεωρία (*Is.* 6). It is well possible that two different Ptolemies were concerned with epistemological questions and underpinned their discussions of the subject on the same passage of *Met.* E (with one of the two first endorsing Aristotle's views and then going on to revise the status of mathematics).

We can conclude that an identification of *VPG*'s Ptolemy and Claudius Ptolemy is all but proven, although the actual compatibility of their epistemological views could make it more plausible than any other identifications proposed so far in scholarship.

9. Conclusions

Our analysis of Ptolemy's *On Aristotle's Life, Testament and Writings* is funded on a philological scrutiny of all relevant texts. The corpus of sources traditionally linked with this work has been enhanced by a new MS of *VPA* and several hitherto unnoticed fragments in Arabic texts. A comparison with between our translation of *VPA* and a number of late antique *Vitae* has allowed to establish a set of Greek and Latin testimonies drawn from *VPG* and discuss the relation between the Arabic and the Graeco-Latin tradition.

The philological groundwork laid in the first part of this thesis has enabled sensible progress in understanding *VPG*'s nature: the text could be assigned to the early 1st-mid 2nd c. AD, which is the only timespan in which one can conceive of an engagement with Andronicus' pinax and the *corpus Aristotelicum* as it is laid out in *VPG*. The dating is corroborated by *VPG*'s peculiar reference to the order of Plato's books, which shows that its author was aware of the issue as it was discussed in Middle Platonic circles. Concurrences in *VPG*, the *Almagest*, the *Tetrabiblos* and the *Harmonics* have allowed to put forth a tentative identification of *VPG*'s author with Claudius Ptolemy; ideally, future research shall scrutinise the evidence adduced here and provide additional arguments in favour of or against said identification.

Ptolemy's biography of Aristotle and transcription of his testament exercised a tangible influence in Late Antiquity, the Arabic world and the Latin-speaking Middle Ages. Nevertheless, Ptolemy clearly attached greater value to his pinax than to any other section of his work. Indeed, the most interesting feature of *VPG* is its discussion of the correct order of Aristotle's books as funded on an epistemological criterion on the one hand and on cross-references in the primary sources on the other. A comparison with *VPG*'s pinax has shown that Ptolemy stayed true to the programmatic assertions of his introduction and strove to organise Aristotle's books accordingly. The section devoted to the biological writings stands out as the one in which Ptolemy may have markedly set himself apart from previous works on the subject; further original contributions to the order of the books may be more difficult to recognise as a consequence of the lack of comparative material.

Three points not treated in this thesis are (i) the historicity of the reports on Aristotle's life in part II, (ii) the question of *VPG*'s Hellenistic sources (as we could only draw attention to possible links with Hermippus of Smyrna), and (iii) a cross-investigation of part III and Aristotle's testament *apud* DL aiming to reconstruct the original document(s). These issues have been discussed repeatedly in earlier research but always on the basis of unsatisfactory reconstructions of the textual transmission. Hopefully, the appearance of our critical edition will pave the way for a new season of studies on *VPG* and *VPA* that will take a fresh look at these tired questions.

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